SRĪ VARADARĀJASWĀMI TEMPLE—KĀÑCHI

A STUDY OF ITS HISTORY, ART AND ARCHITECTURE

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अस्तु श्रीस्तनकस्तूरीवासनावासितोरसे ।
श्रीहस्तिगिरिनाथाय देवराजाय मङ्गलम् ॥

Dedicated to the generations of kings and queens and the humbler folk whose devotion and charity have sustained this temple through the ages



सन्मार्गालोकनाय व्युदनयतु
स नस्तामसीं वृत्तिमीशः ॥

FOREWORD

Kāñchīpuram, one of the reputed *Muktikshetras,* not very far from Madras, is probably the best known of all places in South India to the earliest writers. Aśoka had a *stūpa* built here which Hiuen-Tsang had seen and described. Kāñchī was famous along with Takshaśilā, Vārāṇasī, Valabhī, Nālandā and other great centres of learning. Patañjali, as early as the 2nd century B.C., gives the word Kāñchīpuraka to explain a derivation meaning 'one associated and hailing from Kāñchī'. The famous Tālaguṇḍa inscription of the Kadaṁba king Kākutsthavarman, in tracing the origin of the Kadaṁba family, vividly describes how Mayūraśarman, the founder of this family, went to Kāñchīpuram along with his teacher, to give finishing touches to his Vedic learning by studying the highest realms of thought in the field, possible only in Kāñchīpuram, at that time, reputed for its famous university, *Ghaṭikā.* Patañjali, the highest intellectual of his time, naturally could only think of a rare intellectual centre like Kāñchī. We know from one of the famous historical sculptures in the Vaikuṇthaperumāl temple, narrating the sequence of Pallava history in a series of panels, that, when the main line broke and a prince of the collateral line was to be elected king, Hiraṇyavarman was requested to permit his son, Nandivarman, to be made the king. This request was made by the most prominent leaders of the people themselves headed by the elders of the University of Kāñchī, the *Ghaṭikā.* Hiuen-Tsang, the Chinese traveller that came to Kāñchī early in the 7th century A.D., has praised the city for its intellectual eminence and its love for learning. It is no wonder, since the rulers like Mahendravarman were versatile, prolific in writing and great patrons of art and literature. Buddhism and Jainism also flourished and Jaina Kāñchī is yet an important adjunct of Kāñchī. Dharmapāla, the great Buddhist scholar at Nālandā, was from Kāñchī.

There are two great temples that adorn Kāñchī today as the most conspicuous, the Ekāmreśvara and Varadarāja. There have been many innovations and additions to these temples during the different periods of history. The smaller temples, but aesthetically the most valuable for the study of Pallava art and culture, the Kailāsanātha, Mataṅgeśvara, Airāvateśvara, Vaikuṇṭhaperumāl, have suffered no change or tampering by additions. The Kāmākshī temple, a great seat of Devī worship, with extraordinary reputation as the seat of the grace of Devī extended to the dumb poet Mūka who composed the unforgettable honey-sweet verses in a bunch of five hundred with a rare lilt and resonance, *Mūka-Pañchaśatī,* is another

of the famous shrines here. The only portrait of the greatest intellectual of India for all time, Śankara, is the sculpture of his in a Pallava temple, Eravaṇeśvara, as a juvenile ascetic, seated reverentially beside Vyāsa, who along with Jaimini, flanks Dakshiṇāmūrti, the Lord of Learning.

Varadarāja, the form of the Lord who showed compassion to the elephant in distress, Karivarada, is the most reputed Vishṇu temple in Kāñchīpuram. Varada was a favourite of successive kings and philosophers. Raṅganātha at Śrīraṅgam, Varadarāja at Kāñchī and Śrīnivāsa at Tirupati are the three great deities ever sought for succour by one and all in general and by the Śrī Vaishṇavas in particular. Venkaṭanātha, Vedānta Deśika as he is better known, clearly says that his ancestral property is the Lord in the 'Elephant Hill', Hastiśaila—*asti me hastiśailāgre pitṛipaitāmaham dhanam*. Appayya Dīkshita, the polymath philosopher of the 16th century who wrote the '*Śivārkamaṇidīpikā*', was so attached to Varada, that he would never miss an opportunity to visit Kāñchīpuram to have his *darśana*. Infirmity, which made it difficult for him to travel too often, made him build a temple for Varada, along with that for Śiva, Kālakaṇṭha, in his village Aḍayapalam, utilising the gold with which he was bathed in a *Kanakābhisheka* by king Chinnabomma in appreciation of the *Parimala*, the commentary he wrote on Amalānanda's *Kalpataru*.

The beautiful *mandapa* of the Varadarāja temple with its spirited row of horses prancing on the pillars and the monkey and the cat running after the pigeons on the roofline are unforgettable gems of art.

This temple has long remained without a proper exposition of its treasures both artistic and religious. I am glad that Dr. K.V. Raman has written an excellent account of this famous temple discussing its history, epigraphy, ritual, religion, philosophy and thought. He has chosen suitable illustrations to visually present its importance. I have great pleasure in requesting the discerning scholarly world to appreciate this very interesting monograph on a great temple.

National Museum
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20.6.75

C. Sivaramamurti
Director

PREFACE

This book formed the subject matter of my dissertation for the Degree of the Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Madras. I am thankful to the University for permitting me to publish the thesis.

I must acknowledge my gratitude to Dr. K.K. Pillay, formerly Professor of Social Science, University of Madras, and now Director, Institute of Traditonal Cultures, Madras, for his valuable suggestions and guidance in the preparation of thet hesis. I thank the Chief Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore, for giving me access to the originals and transcripts of the inscriptions; the Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Southern Circle, Madras for lending me some of the photographs illustrated in the book; the Commissioner, H.R.&C.E. (Adm.) Department for permitting me to prepare plans and drawings of the buildings, besides giving me other facilities.

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CHAPTER I

LOCATION AND PHYSICAL FEATURES

Kāñchipuram in Lat. 12°50′ N, Long. 79°40′ E is situated 72 kilometres (45 miles) from Madras City in a west-south-westerly direction. It is a town of considerable size (8 kilometres long and 3 kilometres broad on the average) and is now the headquarters of Kāñchipuram taluk, which forms part of the Chingleput District in Madras State. The town is not only large but also pretty, with its long and broad roads, lined with closely built houses. The town is well connected to important places on all sides by road or rail. The Grand Western Trunk Road coming from Madras runs through it in the south-westerly direction, connecting it with other historic towns like Arcot, Vellore, Bangalore and the well-known Vaishnavite centres like Sriperumbudūr, Tirumaḷisai and Pūndamalli. On the north-east is the road that connects it with Arakonam, from where the roads proceed to well-known places like Tirupati and Nellore both in the Andhra region. On the south are the two small roads cutting across the River Vēgavati and going to places like Uttiramerūr and Madurāntakam. On the eastern side a road runs along the northern bank of the river connecting Kāñchi with Chingleput (about 40 kilometres). Both Chingleput and Madurāntakam are on the Grand Southern Trunk Road leading to all major towns of South India.

Some of these roads are doubtless laid on the older tracts which connected Kāñchi with the neighbouring territories. From early times, Kāñchi was frequented by men hailing from different parts of the country who had come here for study or on pilgrimage or for political purposes. Kāñchi was in touch with the region lying on the west including the Karnātaka and Goa. Even the Kadamba king Mayūra Sarman of the West Coast (Goa) region is said to have entered one of the *ghaṭikās* at Kāñchi as early as the 4th century A.D.[1] Subsequently, the Gangas had friendly relations with the Pallavas of Kāñchi. Still later in the 13th century the Hoysāḷas came upto Kāñchi. About the same time, the later Gangas of Kūvalpura or Kolar (on the same road) have visited Kāñchi and done many benefactions to the temple there. This contact could have been possible by the presence of a highway which, in all probability, was on the lines of the present Western Trunk Road.

The road on the north-east placed Kāñchi within the reach of the highways leading to the ancient kingdoms of Chālukyas and Rāshṭrakūṭas. The frequent struggles between the Pallavas of Kāñchi and the Chālukyas of Badami and the swift movement of their armies to and fro are too well known. Yuan Chuang is also said to have journeyed to Kāñchi from the Chālukyan territory in the 7th century A.D., and he has testified to the fact that the people of Kāñchi were highly esteemed for learning. Later on, in A.D. 960, the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishna III invaded

Kāñchi from the north-west and a famous battle was fought at Takkolam, a place on the road between Kāñchi and Arkonam. The same road should have served the later rulers like the Kākatiyas, the Telugu-Chōḍas of Nellore and the Vijayanagar army in their entry into Kāñchi.

On the southern side, Kāñchi is girdled by the River Palar and its branch, the Vēgavati. But the roads across the river-bed, traces of which are still seen, gave access to places like Madurāntakam on the high road to Tiruchirāpaḷḷi, Thañjāvūr, and other places in the south Tamil country. The Vaishnava literature of the 13th century records that Rāmānuja, while going to Srīrangam (near Tiruchirāpaḷḷi), passed through Madurāntakam on his way. This route connecting Kāñchi and Madurāntakam is still there.

The road on the east, leading to Chingleput, should have been an important one as it connected Kāñchi, the capital, with its port-town, Mahābalipuram, about 53 kms. away. This seems to be confirmed by the presence of two rock-cut Pallava caves on the road—one at Vallam and another at Tirukkaḷukunram.

In spite of many changes, the city of Kāñchi preserves much of its ancient lay-out with its unusually broad streets laid around the numerous old temples standing as prominent landmarks of history. Many of the Pallava temples like the Kailāsanātha, the Vaikunṭaperumāḷ, the Muktēśvara and the Mātangēśvara, not to speak of the numerous large temples of later days like the Ekāmrēśvarar and Kāmākshi Amman temples, are still in good state of preservation. There are still many streets bearing the older names such as the Rājavīdhi or the king's way.

The town of Kāñchi has two principal divisions, the 'Big Kāñchi' and the 'Little Kāñchi', which are also called respectively the 'Siva-Kāñchi' and 'Vishnu-Kāñchi'. The former is the bigger division having the group of larger temples like the Kailāsanātha, Ekāmrēśvarar, Kāmākshi Amman and Vaikunṭaperumāḷ. The 'Little Kāñchi' is on the eastern extremity of the town. It is a compact little village, nucleating round the Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple. The temple-complex comprises of a vast rectangular enclosure, occupying an area of about 20 acres in all, with two imposing gateways or *gōpuras* on the eastern and the western sides. There are the *māḍavīdhis* (main streets) on the four sides of the temple. The long and broad street, opposite the western gateway, known as the *sannidhi-street* connects the temple with the main road that leads to 'Big Kāñchi' or 'Siva Kāñchi'.

Physical features

The land around Kāñchi is flat and sloping towards the east. The general level of the town is about 250 feet above the mean sea-level. The Palar river rises from the hills of the Mysore country and after flowing through North Arcot enters the Chingleput District a few miles west of Kāñchipuram.

'Little Kāñchi' is surrounded by extensive cultivable lands and coconut groves on all sides. A view from the topmost storey of the western *gōpura* gives a panoramic vista of the enchanting landscape which is a vast plain area, dotted with a number of lakes and ponds, cultivated fields and coconut and other plantations (Fig. 1) The River Vēgavati, an arm of the Palar, flows by the southern side of the temple and joins the River Palar at Tirumukkūḍal, about 10 miles south-east of Kāñchi The soil is somewhat clayey, derived from the decomposition of the felspar

which abounds in granite and is very favourable for cultivation. There is no hill or visible rocky outcrop in the vicinity and the nearest hill is the Śīvaram hills, about 10 miles east of Kāñchi. This hill which is of granite had possibly served as the main quarry that supplied the stones for the construction of this temple. The well-known Pallava temples of Kāñchi like the Vaikunṭaperumāḷ, Kailāsanātha, Muktēśvara, Mātangēśvara etc., are entirely made of sandstone available at Kāñchi and its vicinity as bed-rock.[2] The extant structures of Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, however, belong to a much later period and are built of granite stone, probably transported from Paḷaya-Śīvaram and the Malappaṭṭu hills. The dexterity achieved in quarrying and working this hard-stone by the artisans of the Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar times is evident in the various shrines, *maṇḍapas* and *gōpuras* of this temple. The temple-complex built of this hard material and in different periods presents a picture of solidity and grace.

Place names and their origins

The name *Vishnu-Kāñchi* is today applied to the immediate vicinity of this temple and upto the Thēraḍi, where the temple car is stationed. Included in this locality would also be the temples of Tiruvehka or Yadōktakāri and Ashṭabhujam, besides the Varadarāja temple. It is indeed curious that the majority of the ancient Vishnu temples like Vaikunṭaperumāḷ, Ūragam, Pāḍagam, Ulagalandaperumāḷ, Nilāthingaltundam etc., which have received the encomium (*mangaḷāśāsanam*) of the Āḻvārs, are in the so-called Siva-Kāñchi. This shows that the appellations 'Siva Kāñchi' and 'Vishnu Kāñchi' are rather late in origin and the latter name has come to be applied to this locality, after the Varadarāja temple became dominant there. It is noteworthy in this connection that in none of the works of Rāmānuja's period or in the Chōḷa inscriptions, the term Vishnu-Kāñchi appears. The name seems to have gained currency only during the Vijayanagar times. One of the inscriptions of Krishnadēva Rāya in our temple is interesting in this connection. When he was camping at Kāñchi in A.D. 1516, he was met by the representatives of Varadarāja-swāmi and Ekāmrēśvarar temples, who had certain grievances about the routes to be taken by their respective temple-chariots. On hearing this, Krishnadēva Rāya fixed the exact routes of procession for the deities of the two temples.[3] This record gives us the impression that probably this was the beginning of the demarcation of the Vishnu-Kāñchi and Siva-Kāñchi. Perhaps, this was the time when the smaller settlement of Attiyūr was expanded to its present size which includes the Tiruvehka and Ashṭabhujam temples. The earlier name by which the area around Varadarāja-swāmi temple was known was Attiyūr, or Tiruvattiyūr. This name occurs in the verses of Bhūdattāḻvār and subsequent literature and inscriptions. Bhūdattāḻvār, who is considered to be one of the earliest of the twelve Āḻvārs, or Vaishnava saints, calls the deity of this temple simply but familiarly as 'Attiyūrān', i.e., 'the one from Attiyūr'.[4] After the time of the Ālvār and because of his '*mangaḷāśāsanam*' or praise, the place became doubly sacred to the Vaishnavas as one of the great *divyadēsas* (holy shrines), so that in the Vaishnava literature both of Rāmānuja's time and later, the place is called 'Tiruvattiyūr', the prefix 'tiru' meaning 'sacred'. It is worthy of note that the place is mentioned without reference to the parent city of Kāñchi or Kachi.[5] It was a common practice among the Vaishnava Āḻvārs and the Saivite

Nāyanmārs to club the name of a suburb with that of the better known parent town in their songs. For instance, both Tirumaḷisai Ālvār and Tirumangai Āḷvār, while referring to Tiruvallikēṇi, speak of it as 'Mayilai-Tiruvallikēṇi,[6] because Mayilai or Mylapur was better known as it was an important port-town on the east coast. But here, on the other hand, Attiyūr is mentioned by Bhūdattāḷvār without reference to the adjoining city of Kāñchi. It may perhaps indicate that in the early days Attiyūr was an independent entity, distinctly separate from Kachi proper. Probably, the south-easternmost limit of the older Kachi stopped short of the present temple of Tiruvehka or Yadōktakāri in early times, as attested by the *Perumpānarrupaḍai*,[7] which is one of the Sangam anthologies known as *Pattupāṭṭu* or Ten Idyls. This is evidently because Attiyūr at that time did not form part of the city of Kāñchi Presumably, the outlying villages were brought into its widening fold to form the Greater Kāñchi much later.

It is interesting in this connection to note that one of the verses of the Tamil work *Yāpparungālavritti*, attributed to the 11th century A.D., compares Kāñchi city to a peacock, Attiyūr to its head and the splendid groves to its plumage.[8] But an inscription of Kulōttunga I dated A.D. 1073 refers to this place simply as Tiruvattiyūr in Eyilnāḍu in Eyilkōṭṭam of Jayankondasōlamanḍalam.[9] Again, an inscription of Vikramachōḷa dated A.D. 1127 refers to the place in the same manner (i.e., *Eyikōṭṭattu Eyilnāṭṭu Tiruvattiyūr*).[10] The inscriptions of later times (13th century) mention it as 'Kāñchipurattu Tiruvattiyūr', i.e., 'Tiruvattiyūr, part of Kāñchipuram.[11] All these would clearly show that Attiyūr was a separate village for considerable time and its integration with the Kāñchi city was gradual.

Āḷvār's references

The earliest reference to this temple is of course found in Bhūdattāḷvār's hymns. He has devoted two beautiful verses in his *Tiruvandādi* to this deity and pours out his heart to 'one who resides at Attiyūr'.[12]

It is interesting to note that saint Bhūdattāḷvār's hymns containing the references were popular at this temple even as early as A.D. 1129, for an inscription of that date mentions the special offerings to 'Bhūdattāḷvār who has sung the praise of the Lord of Tiruvattiyūr on his birth asterism.[13] It is rather strange that Ālvārs like Poigai, who was born in Kachi and Tirumaḷisai who spent considerable time in the city (and particularly at Tiruvehka) have not referred to the temple at Attiyūr. Nor has it been sung by Tirumangai Āḷvār who has composed hymns on even the smaller temples at Kachi like Ūragam, Pāḍagam, Tiruvehka, besides the Paramēśvara Viṇṇagaram. One of his verses, however, is taken by some scholars to be a probable reference to Srī Varadarāja temple.[14] The verse occurs in his hymn *padıkam* on Paramēśvara Viṇṇagaram (i.e., Vaikunṭaperumāḷ) temple, wherein he describes Kachi as the place where resides 'the great boon-giver and the Lord of the blue colour (*varam tarum māmaṇi vaṇṇan iḍam Kachi*).[15] But here again, the reference is perhaps not specific to the deity of our temple but only to the general attributes of Vishnu who resides at Paramēśvara Viṇṇagaram with which the Āḷvār is immediately concerned in this hymn. However, we find Tirumangai Āḷvār's description echoed by a Chōḷa epigraph at Varadarāja temple dated A.D. 1227 which calls the deity *Varamtarum perumāl,* the Lord who bestows

boons.[16] The same name occurs in an epigraph dated Ś 1373 (A.D. 1451).[17] From this, we can infer that there was a long and persistent tradition associating Tirumangai Āḻvār's verse with Lord Varadarāja of Kāñchi.

Derivation of the village name Attiyūr

There are a number of places in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam which are called after the names of trees such as Marudūr (after the Marudu tree),[18] Nāvalūr (after the Nāval tree),[19] Panaiyūr (after the Panai—palmyra tree), Kadambūr (after the Kadamba tree—*Anthocephalus Cadamba*).[20] It may be pointed out here that in South India, shrines were erected in places where certain trees were regarded as the abode of the deity and worshipped as such; these trees were regarded later on as *sthala vrikshas*. For example, the mango (*āmra*) tree at Ekāmrēśvarar temple at Kāñchi and the *Jambu* tree at Jambukēśvaram and tillai forest of Chidambaram. Similarly, Attiyūr is said to be called after or formed under the Atti tree, *Ficus Glomerata*, commonly found in this country particularly on the river-banks. There is a reference in the *sthala-purāṇa* that this place was once full of Atti trees. But, perhaps a better reason for this association is that the image of the original deity is said to have been made of the Atti tree, and hence called *Atti-varadar*. At least one old Sanskrit text clearly mentions that the main deity of our temple was made of wood and was in a standing posture.[21] As wood was subject to deterioration and weathering, the wooden deity might have been successively changed until it was finally replaced at one time by the present stone image. The wooden image of the deity that was last in the sanctum is now preserved in a small *manḍapa* built in the interior of the large tank (*anantasaras*) within the outermost *prakāra* of the temple. The image is made of *atti* wood and called Atti-varadar or Ādi-Atti-varadar. It is said to have been displaced sometime in the 15th century A.D. Once in 40 years, the image is taken out and a special offering called *manḍala-ārādanai* is conducted here.

The association of the *atti* or *udumbara* tree with the main deity of this temple is significant. It has been prescribed in many of the *Silpa* and *Āgama* texts as the most suitable for making *images*.[22] Indeed, even the later texts prescribe wood as the first material for making the principal images and then only the others, like mortar (*kaḍi-sarkara*) or painting (*chitra*) and metal and lastly stone. In many of the ancient temples the principal images of deities are still wood or stucco. For instance, at Tirukkōilūr (South Arcot District), the huge image of Trivikrama is still of wood. At Kāñchi itself the *mūlavar* (primary) deities of the ancient temples of Tiruvehka, Ulagalandaperumāḷ and Pāḍagam are still in stucco. This clearly shows that installation of images in wood or stucco was the earlier practice, which was also followed in our temple.[23]

The *atti* or *udumbara* wood is of special importance to the Vaishnavites, as, of all the trees, it is viewed as a manifestation of Lord Vishnu himself. The *Vishnu sahasranāma* includes '*udumbara*' among the thousand names of Vishnu.[24]

The special preference of the *udumbara* tree for Vishnu image was in vogue in the third or fourth century A.D., as attested by an inscription discovered at Nagarjunakonda which refers to the consecration of Ashṭabhujaswāmi (eight-armed Vishnu) made of udumbara wood.[25] It is indeed remarkable that this early practice was followed in Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple also.

We do not know when exactly the original wooden deity of Atti-varadar was replaced by the present sculpture. The original wooden image seems to have been replaced by the present one sometime during the 15th century A.D. An epigraph dated Ś 1409 (A.D. 1487) seems to confirm this. It refers to the reconsecration of the images of Lord Varadarāja and Perundēvi Tāyār in the temple. The money for the expenses for the consecration ceremony was contributed by Virūpāksha-dannāyaka, a chief officer under the Vijayanagar king Narasinga Rāya.[26] From other inscriptions we know that Aḻagia-manavāḷa Jiyar was the *Kōil-kēḷvi* of the temple at that time.[27] The reconsecration was probably done in connection with the installation of the present *mūlavar*-image in the place of the older wooden one.

Derivation of Hastigiri

The other name by which the place is popularly called in the Vaishnavite literature is Hastigiri or Hastiśaila, elephant-hill, said to have been derived from the Sanskrit word *hastin* or elephant.[28] A great peculiarity of the temple is that the main shrine of Varadarāja is not on the ground level; but is placed on the top of a square platform raised to a height of 10 metres. This high platform is believed to represent a hillock, locally designated as the 'Hastigiri', the 'elephant-hill' or simply as a 'malai' or hill. The hillock on which the temple is supposed to stand was, according to the *sthala-purāṇa* of the temple, the abode of the divine elephant—Gajēndra, whom the Lord Varadarāja saved from the clutches of a crocodile.[29] This association is at least as old as the 11 century A.D. because Kūrathāḻvār, a contemporary and disciple of Rāmānuja, calls the deity as 'Karigirisa' i.e, Lord of the elephant-hill or 'Hasti Bhūshana', the ornament of the elephant-hill.[30] An 11th century stone record mentions the place as Hastipura. Vedānta Dēsika (13th-14th century) also calls the place Hastigiri, Karigiri in Sanskrit and Vēḻamalai and Nāgamalai in Tamil[31] A late inscription refers to the deity as Gajēndragirinātha i.e., 'the God who resides on the elephant-hill'.[32] An inscription of 22nd year of Gandagōpāla (circa A.D. 1272) calls the deity of the temple as *Dviradāchalanātha*, the God of the elephant mountain.[33]

The Tamil form of Hastigiri viz., Attigiri was also frequently used in Tamil poems of Vedānta Dēsika and the inscriptions. 'Attigiri Aruḷāḷar' is a very familiar name used in the epigraphs and literature alike.

Thus, the etymology of place-name has had a chequered evolution. The simple Tamil name of Attiyūr, glorified by the Āḻvār, had to undergo a painful course of Sanskritisation to become Hastipura and then Hastigiri and then the latter was again tried to be Tamilised as Attigiri ! Curiously, the latter word is a hybrid, neither purely Sanskrit nor Tamil. *Atti* is Tamil but *giri*, meaning hill, is Sanskrit; when the word Hastigiri attained popularity in the Vaishnavite literature, the legendary story of the elephant was probably tagged on to it because *Hasti* in Sanskrit means elephant. This legend has attained currency so much that the significance of the original Tamil word, Attiyūr, was lost.

This is of course not peculiar to Attiyūr alone. Several places in Tamilnād had almost lost their original Tamil names as the Sanskritised names obtained greater currency. To cite only two examples, Kāñchipurm was known to the early Tamil literature only as Kachi and Kachipēḍu. But now the Sanskrit form, namely,

Kāñchipurm has come to stay.

Similarly, the original Tamil word Mallai which later became Māmallapuram was Sanskritised to Mahābalipuram and then the legend of king Mahābali was later on dovetailed into it in a most artificial manner. From Attiyūr to Hastigiri, a similar metamorphosis has occurred.

Perumāḷ-kōil and Tyāga-maṇḍapa

Two more names of the places are also found in the Vaishnavite literature. One of them is in the usage among the Srī-Vaishnavas while the other is not so well-known but found occurring in their literature of the 13th and 14th centuries A.D. The former is *Perumāḷ-kōil* and the latter is *Tyāga-maṇḍapa.* Three most important places for the Srī-Vaishnavites are Srīrangam, Tirumalai and Kāñchi which are referred to by them as *Kōil, Tirumalai* and *Perumāḷ-kōil* respectively. The name *Perumāḷ-kōil* for referring to the Kāñchi temple gained currency evidently after Rāmānuja's association with these three temples. The other name, *Tyāga-maṇḍapa,* occurs in the *Guruparampara* of Pinbaḷagia Perumāḷ Jīyar (13th century A.D.) and the *Āchārya-Hridayam* of Aḷagia-manavāḷa Nāinār (14th century).[34] Hastigiri is referred to as *Tyāga-maṇḍapa,* while Srīrangam and Tirumalai are referred to as *Bhōga-maṇḍapa* and *Pushpa-maṇḍapa* respectively. The exact import of the names is not clear, but the name *Tyāga-maṇḍapa* seems to signify the bountiful grace of the Lord. *Tyāga* means sacrifice or 'to give up' and Lord Varadarāja as the king among boon-bestowers gives up everything for his devotee. Hence, the name *Tyāga-maṇḍapa.*

The names of the main deties

The same trend of Sanskrit words gaining greater currency is noticeable in the case of the names of the presiding deities as well. In all the early records belonging to the Chōḷa times, the presiding deity was popularly known as Tiruvattiyūr-Āḷvār or Attiyūr-Āḷvār[35] or Tiruvattiyūrninraruḷiaperumāḷ[36]—all meaning the Lord who presides over Tiruvattiyūr. This was in keeping with the practice of the times. We can find similar references to the presiding deities of various other well-known places. Lord Varāha, the presiding deity of Tiruvida-endai, was known in inscriptions as *Tiruvida-entai*-Āḷvār,[37] the Lord at Tiruppāḍagam in Kāñchi, who is now called Pāndava-Thūthar, was called Tiruppāḍagattu-āḷvar.[38] Such instances can be multiplied. But these clearly show that the presiding deities were named in relation to their locality for which invariably the Tamil names used by the Āḷvārs were in common usage. Sanskrit names, though known, did not obtain wide currency. To give one more example, the reclining Vishnu at Tiruvehka at Kāñchi was known to the Ālvārs as Sonnavaṇṇam-Seida-Perumāḷ and is referred to as such in the lithic records.[39] But now the deity is more familiarly known by the Sanskrit equivalent *Yadōktakāri.* Likewise, the name *Attiyūrān,* used by Bhūdattāḷvār first, was subsequently popularly used in the Chōḷa days and hence, the name *Attiyūr-āḷvār.* But this name gradually disappears in later records, especially in the Vijayanagar times.

The other popular Tamil names of the deity which are used in the early as well as later records are Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ and Pēraruḷāḷar.[40] These terms, it is impor-

tant to note, are frequently used in the hymns of the Āḻvārs to describe Vishnu and His bountiful grace.[41] *Aruḷ*, meaning grace or boon and *aruḷāḷar* means the' source of all grace' or the bestower of grace. Another Tamil name conveying the same idea and which is mentioned in the inscriptions is *varam-tarumperumāḷ*, the Lord who bestows boons.[42] The Sanskrit equivalent of this name '*varada*' or '*Varadarāja*' meaning the king among boon-bestowers is used by the Sanskrit literature of Rāmānuja's time like Kūrattāḻvār's *Varadarājastavam.* Another familiar Sanskrit name by which he was known was Devarāja—the king of Gods. This name occurs in Tirukkachinambi's work—*Dēvarājasṭagam.* The Tamil equivalents of this used in the later inscriptions are : Devapperumāḷ or Thepperumāḷ.[43] The last two names, as well as Varadarāja, are very popular now and the original names Attiyūr-Āḻvār or Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ are hardly known to the common people, though the knowledgeable Srīvaishnavites know about this. In the Kannaḍa inscription of the Hoysāḷas, the deity is mentioned as Allālanātha, a Kannaḍa form of the name Aruḷālanātha.[44] A few later epigraphs refer to the Lord as *Srī-Kāñchipurattu-perumāḷ*, the Lord of Kāñchi.[45] This shows the great popularity attained by the temple.

The chief consort of Lord Varadarāja for whom there is a separate shrine within the temple is known by the name Perundēvi Tāyār. The term Tāyār in Tamil means 'mother' and is popularly used by the Vaishnavas to denote Srī or Lakshmi. The Saivites use the word '*amman*', also meaning mother to denote the consort of Siva. An inscription dated A.D. 1268 mentions the Tāyār by the Tamil form *Periapirāṭṭiyār* and another dated A.D. 1487 as Perundēviyār,[46] both meaning the 'great or chief consort' of Vishnu. The word *pirāṭṭi* (feminine of *piran*) is a word often used in the Āḻvār's hymns and the Vaishnavite commentaries for Vishnu's consorts. The terms like Sīta-pirāṭṭi and Nappinnai-pirāṭṭi referring respectively to Sīta and Nappinnai are well known.

To sum up the foregoing discussion, we find that the ancient name of the place where Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple was situated, was known as Attiyūr or Tiruvattiyūr as found in the hymns of Bhūdattāḻvār and the earlier Chōḷa inscriptions of the temple. The name Vishnu-Kāñchi was applied to the locality when it was made a bigger unit sometime during the 16th century A.D. The name Attiyūr perhaps owed its origin to the *Atti* or *udumbara* tree which formed the nucleus of the temple and the village. The older principal deity of the temple was also of *Atti* (*udumbara*) wood. It was replaced sometime in the late 15th century. Attiyūr was Sanskritised into Hastipura and Hastigiri, by which name it is familiar to the Sanskrit works. Since Hasti means an elephant in Sanskrit, the elephant-aspect was dovetailed into it in the *Sthalapurāṇa* of the temple. The central elevated enclosure in which the main sanctum is placed came to be likened to a hill and it was designated as Hastigiri or elephant-hill. This name occurs in the works of Kūrattāḻvār and Tirukkachi Nambi, contemporaries of Rāmānuja. Probably, in the earlier days, Attiyūr was an independent village as it is mentioned in the inscriptions of the 11th century without any relation to Kāñchi city. But in the later records, it is specifically mentioned as forming part of Kāñchi city (*Kāñchi-nagarattu-Tiruvattiyūr*).

In the early stone-records in Tamil, the presiding deity is called Attiyūr-āḻvār. The other Tamil names used for the deity are Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ or Pēraruḷāḷar. But since the days of Rāmānuja, the names like Varadarāja, Dēvarāja, Hastigirinātha

etc., became more popular. The Tamil forms of the latter in Dēvapperumāḷ and Tēpperumāḷ are also currently popular now. The chief consort of Lord Varadarāja is known as Perundēvi Tāyār or Peria-pirāṭṭi, both of which occur in inscriptions of the 13th century A.D.

Before we end the chapter, we will briefly review the legends that have grown round the temple. As is usual with the many other temples, the *Sthalapurāṇa* of the temple purports to tell its hoary origin in its own artificial but ingenuous manner known as the *Hastigiri-mahātmiyam*, it is in the form of a dialogue between two sages Brighu and Nārada. According to it, the temple was the place chosen by Brahma to do his *yajña* and out of it emerged Vishnu in the form of Lord Varadarāja, in the Punyakōṭi-vimāna. Brahma requested him to permanently remain in the spot to bless His devotees for all time to come. The legend also relates the story of Gajēndra-mōksha and connects the temple with the legend.

Srī Vēdānta Dēsika (circa A.D.1269 to 1370) retold the *purānic* story in his own elaborate and inimitable style in his well-known work *Satyavrta-Mahātmiyam* or the *Mēivrata-mānmiyam*. This will go to show that the legend in its full-fledged form was already current in his time. The occurrence of names like Hastigiri or Karigiri (elephant-hill) in the Sanskrit work *Varadarājastavam* by Kūrattāḷvār may suggest that the nucleus of the legend was current during his time (11th century A.D.).

It is almost futile to dissect the *Sthalapurāṇa* with the weapons of historical criticism. It is typical of the Indian way of recording the history of a hoary institution like temples by investing them with a divine origin and connecting them with the Gods like Brahma and sages like Brighu, Nārada etc. These types of stories are repeated in the *sthalapurāṇa* of many a temple in the same monotonous pattern. Their aim was to appeal to faith and not reason. Nevertheless, it cannot be gainsaid that these legends were quite popular with the devotees through the ages. These legends have provided the theme for many devotional poems on the temple, like Vēdānta Dēsika's work already cited, Manavāḷa Mahāmuni's *Dēvarāja-mangalam*, Appayya Dīkshitar's *Varadarājastavam* etc. The legends have inspired a few festivals that are introduced in the temple and quite a few sculptural compositions found in the Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa of the temple (see Chapter IX).

NOTES

1. *Ep. Ind.* VIII, p. 34.
2. K.R. Srinivasan, *Pallava Architecture, Ancient India* (New Delhi), Vol. 14.
3. 644 of 1919.
4. *Iyarpa* II *Tiruvandādi*, verses 95 and 96.
5. *Rāmānuja Nūṟṟandādi*, verse 31.
6. *Nānmugan Tiruvandādi*, verse 35.
   Peria Tirumoli, II Ten, (iii) *Tirumoli*.
7. *Perumpānāṟṟupadai*, verses 2 to 425.
   See *Pattupāttu*, Ed. By U.V. Swaminatha Iyer (Madras, 1950), pp. 203-205.
8. *Yapp*. 93; M. Raghava Iyengar, *Ārāichi Tokudi*, Madras, 1964, p. 225.
9. *S.I.I.* IV, No. 862 (49 to 1893).
10. 436 of 1919.
11. *S.I.I.* IV, No. 859, 860.
12. *Op. cit.* V, 96.
13. *S.I.I.* Vol. III, No. 80; "*Tiruvattiyūr Ālvārai Pādiarulina Srī Bhūdattāḷvār*"—The editor has wrongly read that Poigai Āḷvār has also sung about this temple and identifies Vehka with this temple. It is well known that Vehka or Tiruvehka refers to Yadōktakāri temple of Kāñchi and not to the Varadarāja temple.
14. P.B. Annangaracharya : *Divya Prabhanda Divyārtha Dīpikai*, Madras, 1927, p. 327.
15. *Peria Tirumoli*, II Ten, 9th *padikam*.
16. 598 of 1919.
17. 645 of 1919.
18. *Terminalia Tomentosa*.
19. Black plum or *Eugenia arnottiana*.

20. R.P. Sethu Pillai, *Ūrum Pērum* (1946), p. 12 ff.
21. A chapter of 160 Sanskrit verses interpolated in the ancient *Pāñcharātra-āgama* text of *Jayākya-samhita*. Edited by Embar Krishnamachariar, 1931, Baroda. Also see K.V. Soundara Rajan, *Kausthubha-prāsāda New Light on Jayakya Tantra*, in J.O.R. XVII, No. I.
22. T.A.G. Rao : *Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 48-49.
23. K.R. Srinivasan : *Some aspects of religion as revealed by early monuments and literature of the south*, J.M.U. XXXII.
24. *Nyagrōdo-Udumbarōsvastaha Sānūrānda Nishūdanah* (v. 88).
25. *Indian Archaeology—A Review*, 1958-59, p. 8.
26. *S I.T.I.* I, 348, 648 of 1919.
27. See Chapter V for further details about the Jiyar.
28. M.E.R. 1893, p. 6.
29. Vide Chapter II below for further details. See Chapter IX also for the significance of iconographic concept of Varadarāja or Gajēndra-varada.
30. *Varadarājastavam*, verses 17 and 81.
31. *Mēivrta Mānmiyam*, verses 20 and 25. *Adaikkalapathu*, verse 3.
32. 45 of 1893; *S.I.I.* IV, 859.
33. 41 of 1893; *Dvirada* means elephant—M.E.R. 1893, p. 6.
34. *Āchārya-Hridayam, sūtra* 84, published with commentary by B.M, Purushottama Naidu, Madras, 1965, pp. 192-193.
35. 519 of 1919 (A D. 1050).
36. *S.I.I.* IV, 358 and *S.I.T.I.* I, 404.
37. 260 and 261 of 1910.
38. *S.I.T.I.*, I, No. 435.
39. 561 of 1919 and also *S.I.T.I.*, I, p. 423.
40. 406, 348, 622, 431, 375 etc. of 1919.
41. *Vinaiolithamarar Peruvisumbu aru umlpērarulālan* (*Peria Tirumoli* 1-4-4). Also *Peria Tirumoli* 4-3-1, 9-2-7, 9-5-4.
42. 598 of 1919.
43. *S.I.T.I*, I, No. 354, pp. 327-328 and 398 of 1919.
44. *Ep. Car.*
45. *S.I.T.I.*, I, 359.
46. *S.I.I*, IV, No. 852.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The three hundred and fifty inscriptions found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple contain many interesting details regarding the political vicissitudes through which the Attiyūr village or indeed the city of Kāñchi had passed. From them, we know that Kāñchi city had continuously played a dominant role in the history of Tamilnād and that its possession was coveted by successive dynasties of kings, with varying degrees of success. Thus, epigraphs belonging to the dynasties like the Chōḷa, the Pāṇḍya, the Hoysāḷa, the Kākatiya, the Vijayanagar, besides the various smaller dynasties like the Telugu-Chōdas, the Kāḍavarāyas and the Sāmbūvarāyas clearly indicate the eventful variations in the political fortunes of Attiyūr and Kāñchi. There are also a few epigraphs of the post-Vijayanagar period, many of which do not mention the reigning dynasty, probably because the political pendulum was swinging too fast. One of them, however, belongs to the Nawab of the Carnātic under whose control came the Kāñchi area in the beginning of the 18th century.

This chapter explains the political implications of these epigraphs against the general background of the history of Kāñchi and South India as a whole. These epigraphs can indeed be said to epitomise the history of the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region of which Kāñchi was the most important city and, for some considerable time, the capital. Apart from the light that these inscriptions throw on the broad political developments that were taking place, they are of considerable value as they introduce to us many little-known nobles, chieftains or officers and their activities. Very often, these local leaders had considerable power and influence and extended patronage to the religious institutions and the men of letters. Several kings, queens and princes have paid their homage to Kāñchi and to the shrine of Pēraruḷāḷa in the midst of wars and battles. It is a remarkable fact that this great temple had withstood several stormy political upheavals and come down to us almost unscathed by any of them. The reason obviously is that even though several dynasties were fighting with one another to have a hold over the Kāñchi city, they all had equal veneration for the established religious institutions. That is why we find every new conqueror or the victor making new grants and donations to this temple. All these will be noticed in greater detail in the sequel.

The inscriptional evidences are quite substantial upto the end of the Vijayanagar empire. Subsequent to that period, we have only a few stray epigraphs, the latest dated A.D. 1723. Except the latter epigraph, the post-Vijayanagar inscriptions, as a rule, omit to mention the ruling king and dynasty. This glaring departure from their normal practice of mentioning the ruling king is probably indicative of the political uncertainty that prevailed in South India or the Carnātic region as the

major portion of it came to be called later, consequent on the collapse of the Vijayanagar empire. Kāñchi city also lost its former political importance. Even during the reign of Srīranga III, it was only a part of the governorship of Pūndamalli, under the control of a minor chief—Dāmarla Venkaṭappa. In the latter half of 17th century, the Kāñchi area passed under the control of the Gōlkoṇḍa power and later of the Nawabs of the Carnātic under the general control of the Mughal Empire. In the same period, the town was occupied by the Mahrāṭṭa forces under Śivāji for a brief period. In the 18th century, during the Carnātic wars, it was the scene of many a battle between the French and the English between whom it changed hands in quick succession. By 1761, the French ceased to be a political power in the Carnātic and the English were in charge of a considerable portion of the present Chingleput District including Kāñchi and its neighbourhood. From then on, except for a few years when Hyder Ali invaded Kāñchi, the latter place remained under the *de facto* control of the English East India Company at Madras In 1801, the English formally took over the administration of the Carnātic from the Nawab who was pensioned off. Srī Varadarājaswāmi Temple was undoubtedly in existence during the Pallava times, as attested by the hymns of Bhūdattāḻvār. But neither the inscription nor the architectural vestiges of that period have come down to us except the two lion-pillars in sandstone that are to be found on the tank-bund and in the Sudarsana shrine. In the last quarter of the 9th century, the Chōḷas under the dynamic leadership of Āditya I decisively defeated the Pallavas and the Pāndyas and established their sway over Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam and the Kāvēri basin. Āditya's hold over here is well attested by his inscriptions found at Kāñchi, Takkōlam, Tirukkaḷukunram and other places. The rise of the Chōḷa power to an imperial position and its conflicts first with the Rāshṭrakūṭas and later with their successors, form the dominant features of the history of South India for next 350 years—from 850 to 1200 A.D. Under the two brilliant monarchs, Rājarāja the Great and his son Rājēndra I (A.D. 1012-1044), the Chōḷa dominion became extensive including the whole of the modern states of Tamilnād (or Madras), Āndhra and Kērala, parts of Mysore and the island of Ceylon. One important fact to be noted is that in Rājarāja's reign Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam came to be called Jayamgoṇḍa Sōḷamaṇḍalam—after Rājarāja's own title. Kāñchi, by virtue of its strategic position, was considered an important city. It was a base and perhaps a secondary capital for the Chōḷas on their northward expansion. When the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Krishna III made a brief incursion into the Tamil country in A.D. 949, he boasted that he had captured Kāñchi and Thanjāvūr (*Kachchiyum Thanjaiyum koṇḍa*).[2] From an epigraph of Uttama Chōḷa, we know that there was a palace with a chitramaṇḍapa at Kāñchi, where probably the *durbars* were held.[3] Sundara Chōḷa, while directing his northern campaign, is said to have died in 973 in his golden palace at Kāñchi.[4] Similarly, Rājēndra I stayed at Kāñchipuram before he set out on a march against the Ratta country.[5] The palace and a *maṇḍapa* probably continued to be there at Kāñchi for some considerable time for we again hear of it in connection with the Kalinga War during the time of Kulōttunga I.[6]

Rājādhirāja I

Rājēndra I was succeeded by Rājādhirāja I (A.D. 1018-1054). His inscription dated 32nd year (A.D. 1050) is found on the right wall inside the Narasimha shrine

in the Varadarājaswāmi temple at Kāñchi.[7] It begins with his *praśasti 'Tingalartaru'*. Rājādhirāja was a great warrior, who personally led the Chōḷa army against the Western Chāḷukyas under Sōmēśvara I and inflicted a heavy blow on them in the battle of Koppam in 1052. But unfortunately, he fell fighting on the battle-field. Rājādhirāja's son Rājēndra II crowned himself king on the very battle-field of Koppam, where he distinguished himself by his bravery and is said to have marched to Kolhapūr to erect a pillar of victory there. He scored yet another victory over the Western Chāḷukyas at Kūḍal-Sangamam at the junction of the Tunga and Bhadra in Mysore country. As Rājēndra's immediate brother Rājamahēndra, who was chosen heir-apparent in 1059, died prematurely, his younger brother Vīrarājēndra I succeeded to the Chōḷa throne. He ruled from A.D. 1063 to 1069. During his time, the Western Chāḷukya king Vikramāditya and his brother Jayasimha planned to invade the Chōḷa country; but Jayakēśi, the Kadamba king of Goa, is said to have mediated and brought about peace between the Chōḷa and Chāḷukya at Kāñchipuram. The Chōḷa also gave his daughter in marriage to Vikramāditya. Vīrarājēndra's another daughter was given in marriage to the Ganga prince of Kalinga named Rājarāja.

Kulōttunga I (1070-1120)

Vīrarājēndra was succeeded by his son Ādhirājēndra who ruled from 1067 to 1070 with his father, and only for a few weeks, as sole monarch. After him the Chōḷa throne passed on to Kulōttunga I, who did not belong to the direct line of the Chōḷas; but he was an Eastern Chālukya prince who had married the daughter of the Chōḷa king Rājēndra II. He succeeded in occupying the coveted Chōḷa throne, despite the attempts of Chāḷukya king Vikramāditya VI to prevent a union of the Vēngi and the Chōḷa power in the same hands. During his reign the Chōḷa empire became somewhat depleted in extent, for Ceylon which was part of the Chōḷa empire till his time asserted its independence; Gangavādi and Vēngi also slipped out of the Chōḷa hands—the former to the Hoysāḷa Vishnuvardhana (A.D. 1111-1141) and the latter to the Western Chāḷukyas. But Kulōttunga I exhibited the strength of the Chōḷa power by undertaking two successful raids on the Kalinga territory in in 1096 and 1110 A D. The second expedition is more famous, for it has been immortalised by a Jayangonḍār, a contemporary Tamil poet, in his famous work *Kalingattupparaṇi*. The Chōḷa army was led by Karunākara Tonḍaimān, a scion of the old Pallava family, who now served under the Chōḷas. The *parani* has it that when Kulōttunga held a *durbar* in his palace at Kāñchipuram it was reported to him that the Kalinga king Anantavarman was in default of his annual tribute which caused the expedition.[9]

It is indeed interesting to note that an epigraph dated 43rd year of Kulōttunga I in our temple mentions Karunākara Tonḍaimān and his wife Aḻagiyamanavāḷini-manḍaiyāḻvār. He is said to have belonged to Vanḍalānjēri in Tirumaraiyūr nāḍu in Kulōttunga Chōḷa Vaḷanāḍu. His wife donated a lamp to the temple.[10] Aḻagiyamanavāḷini is the name of the consort of Lord Ranganātha of Srīrangam and the adoption of this name and her gift to this Vishnu temple at Kāñchi may show us that she was a devotee of Vishnu.[11]

Even though this expedition resulted in the defeat of the king of North Kalinga, and brought large booty for the Chōḷas, it did not result in any permanent occupation

of Kalinga.

Five inscriptions of Kulōttunga I are found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple—dated from his 3rd year to 45th year.[12] The former is found engraved on the left wall of the gōpura in front of the Narasimha shrine. It begins with his famous *praśasti—'Tirumannivaḷangu'*, which he used in his early records. The later epigraphs are found on the gōpura-wall in front of the Abhishēka-maṇḍapa. His epigraphs are also found in the other temples of Kāñchi and its neighbourhood like Pāṇḍava-perumāḷ temple, Tiruvanēkatankāpadam temple and Ulagaḷandaperumāḷ temple.[13] The epigraph in the last mentioned temple informs us that Kulōttunga I visited this temple in his 40th year along with his two wives Tribhuvanamuḍaiyāl and Sōḷakulavalli. They made donations to that Vishnu temple on the occasion.[14] The epigraph dated 45th year in our temple records a grant of money at the early morning service by Vangamulyūr Uḍaiyān Āraiyan Mummuḍi-Sōḷan *alias* Anukkap-pallavaraiyan of Mannināḍu in Sōḷamanḍalam.[15] His titles show that he should have been an official of importance. The epithets *Pallavaraiyan* and *Mummuḍi-Sōḷan* are significant. We have one Irayiravan Pallavaraiyan *alias* Mummuḍi-Sōḷappan, a high official of *Perundanam* rank in the time of Rājarāja I, who had *mummuḍi* as one of his titles. It is possible that the official of the Kāñchi record was a descendant or a relative of the official mentioned in the Tanjore record.[16]

Another famous general of Kulōttunga I was Naralōkavīra, who did substantial service to the Varadarāja temple. He was a highly respected official who had a large fief at Maṇavil in North Arcot District, which he perhaps obtained as a reward for his distinguished services in the southern campaigns of Kulōttunga I.[17] His various military exploits on behalf of the Chōḷa king in the Pāṇḍyan, Vēngi and Orissa countries are borne out by a number of inscriptions found at Chidambaram and Tiruvaḍi (in South Arcot) and in the Pāṇḍyan country and also the *Vikramaśōlan-uḷa*, a Tamil poem composed by Oṭṭakkūttan.[18] He had many colourful titles such as Kalingar-kōn (chief of Kalingas), Aruḷākāra, Ponnambalakkūttan, Toṇḍaimān etc. He did meritorious religious and charitable works such as the construction of the hundred-pillared *maṇḍapa*, the laying out of a garden, and fixing of street lights (*vīdhi-dīpa*) at the famous Siva temple at Chidambaram; construction of a hundred-pillared *maṇḍapa*, a dancing hall and other structures at Tiruvaḍi. Similarly, his patronage extended to Varadarājaswāmi temple also. A long Sanskrit record of the temple which bears no date records the construction by Naralōkavīra of the kitchen-room, a *maṇḍapa* and the high *prākāra* walls and the setting up of the recumbent image of Hari. He made a gift of gold pinnacle to this new shrine and made endowment for the perpetual lamps and a flower-garden. It is a record couched in beautiful poetic language. Naralōkavīra continued to serve Vikrama Chōḷa, the son and successor of Kulōttunga I.

Vikrama Chōḷa (A.D. 1118-1135)

After Kulōttunga I, came Vikrama Chōḷa (A.D. 1118-1135), Kulōttunga II (1133-1150) and Rājarāja II (1146-1173), whose inscriptions are found in this temple. The reign of these kings, except that of the first one, was characterised by general peace. Vikrama Chōḷa's reign witnessed expeditions to recover Vēngi and Gangavāḍi which the Chōḷas had lost in the time of Kulōttunga I. Vikrama Chōḷa,

as a prince, is said to have participated in the Kalinga expedition, led by Karunākara Toṇḍamān. He is said to have joined it at Kāñchi. His epigraphs, seven in number and ranging from his 8th to 17th regnal years, are found on the south and north walls of the 'Rock', inside the Narasimha shrine and another at the small shrine of Kariamāṇikkavaradar shrine.[19] The latter epigraph records that king Vikrama Chōḷa set up the image in the temple and made a gift of land as *dēvadāna* for its daily worship. The image is mentioned as Vikrama-Chōḷa-Vinnagar-ālvār. Though a Saivite, he was liberal to Vishnu temples. His services to the Vishnu (Ranganātha) temple, Srīrangam, like the construction of the fifth*p rākāra* and other structures are recorded in the *Srīrangam Kōil-oḷugu.*

Kulōttunga II (A.D. 1133-1150)

Vikrama Chōḷa's son and successor Kulōttunga II is represented in our temple by only one epigraph found on the south wall of the 'Rock'.[20] It is an undated epigraph; but the use of the praśasti *Pūmannu padumam* may show that it belonged to the first decade of his reign i.e., sometime before A.D. 1143. The reign of Kulōttunga was marked by peace and prosperity and literary activities. The extent of the empire was well-maintained. Some scholars have held that Krimikanṭa Chōḷa, mentioned in the Vaishnava *guruparamparai* as the persecutor of Rāmānuja, was Kulōttunga II.[21]

Rājarāja II

The successor of Kulōttunga II on the Chōḷa throne was Rājarāja II whose regnal years are counted from about A.D. 1146. He is represented in our collection by two inscriptions dated in his third and fourth regnal years.[22] The former epigraph begins with his *praśasti 'pū mariviya tirumādum'*—which gives a high-flown account of the benefits of his rule. The major part of Rājarāja's reign was peaceful; but the closing years witnessed the outbreak of a fierce civil war in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom which dragged the Chōḷa and the Sinhalese power on opposite sides. The succession dispute dragged on till about A.D. 1177, the ultimate result being dreadful to both the Chōḷa and the Sinhalese powers for 'out of the ashes of the civil war arose the Pāṇḍya power which in its renewed strength soon swallowed up both the kingdoms which espoused the rival causes of the Protagonists in the civil war'.[23]

Rājādhirāja II

He succeeded Rājarāja II and ruled from about A.D. 1163 to 1179. He continued the Chōḷa policy of intervention in the Pāṇḍyan affairs, successfully drove back the Sinhalese and placed Vīra Pāṇḍya on the Pāṇḍyan throne as against Kulasēkhara who was found guilty of treachery towards the Chōḷa power. Under him, the extent of the Chōḷa empire continued to be the same as under Rājarāja II. His inscriptions are found in many places in Toṇḍaimandalam and even at Nellore in the Andhra State. His inscription dated 14th year is found engraved on the north wall of the third *prākāra.*[24] It mentions the gift by a Ganga chief named Ghaṭṭi-nulamba Bhujabala-vīra Ahomallarasa. He is described as Mahāmaṇḍalika of Gangamaṇḍala. As pointed out by Prof. Nilakanta Sastri, this may show that even a part of the Ganga country was included in the Chōḷa empire and that he was a feudatory of Rājādhi-

rāja II. In the reign of the latter's successor Kulōttunga III, another Ganga chieftain did service to the temple.

Kulōttunga III (A.D. 1178-1216)

He has been called the last great Chōḷa king to enjoy the benefits of an extensive empire. His was a troublesome period for the Choḷa empire came to be incessantly threatened by disruptive forces from within and the ambitious and newly rising powers from outside. Even though Kulōttunga III in the early years of his reign actively interfered with the Pāṇḍyan civil war and put his own candidate, Vikrama Pāṇḍya, on the throne and later still, could penetrate as far south as Ceylon, his last years saw the invasion of his dominion by Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya, the first of a series of powerful Pāṇḍyas, who retrieved their kingdom from the civil wars and made it the most dominant power in South India in the first half of the 13th century. The victorious march of the Pāṇḍyan forces right upto the heart of the Chōḷa kingdom exposed the vulnerability of the Chōḷa power. The Chōḷa monarch sought refuge in flight but later on, restored to the throne after some negotiations and thanks, in a way, to the intervention of the Hoysāḷa king Vīranarasimha. Added to this challenge posed by the rapidly rising Pāṇḍyan power was the recalcitrant spirit of the numerous feudatories like the Telugu-Chōḍas, the Kāḍavarāyas and the Sāmbūvarāyas who were preparing to break off from the Chōḷa yoke and assume their independence. For a brief period, during his reign, the Telugu-Chōḍas who were his vassals tried to declare their independent rule over Kāñchi which necessitated Kulōttunga to undertake a campaign and recapture the city. This is attested by his Srīrangam record which states that he 'entered Kāñchi with his anger abated'.[25] More about this temporary loss of Kāñchi and its recapture, and about the chequered career of the overgrown vassals and their bearings on the history of Kāñchi will be considered in greater detail later.

Quite a number of epigraphs of Kulōttunga III are found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple, their dates range from 3rd to 37th year of his reign.[26] They record a number of grants to the temple by many of his chieftains and officers. Sīyagangan, son of Chōḷendra Simha, built a shrine at this temple.[27] He was the Ganga chieftain of Kōlār (near Mysore) who figures in many inscriptions of Kulōttunga. In this record, he calls himself as 'Kūvalalapura-paramēśvara'—'Ganga-kulōtbhava', i.e., 'the Lord of Kōlār' and 'one who was born of the Ganga family'. The significance of the Tamil biruda *Siraimīṭṭapperumāḷ* i.e., the rescuer or saviour from the prison, is rather obscure. Incidentally, it is of interest to note that this chieftain Sīyagangan was the patron of the well-known Tamil grammarian Pavanandi, the author of the *nannūl*. These donations and patronage, extended by the Ganga chieftains to the temples and poets in Tamilnād, show their friendly attitude to their Chōla overlords. Another epigraph dated 14th year of Kulōttunga III (i.e , A.D. 1191) records a gift by one Ilaiālvān Kālingarāyan of Neṭṭūr.[28] Neṭṭūr was scene of a battle between Vīra Pāndya and Kulōttunga in which the former was worsted. This battle of Neṭṭūr took place in A.D. 1189 and our epigraph here is dated in 1191—two years later than the event. Kālingarāyan might have been a general, who took part in the famous battle. The other chieftains who made endowments to the Varadarājaswāmi temple were : Ammaiappan Kannuḍaipperumāḷ *alias* Vikramaśōḷa Sāmbūva-

rāya,[29] Peddarasar, son of Madurāntaka Pottappichchōḷar Nallasiddharasan, the Telugu-Chōḍa chieftain,[30] Mahābalivānarayar who was probably a Bāṇa chieftain. He gave a village named Kulōttunga-viḷagam free of taxes to the temple[31] Another chieftain, probably of Malai-nāḍu or Kērala named Rājādhirāja Malaiyarāyan *alias* Dharmaparipālan son of Munaiyadirāyan, one of the malai-mudalis of Kuḷōttunga.[32]

Rājarāja III and Rājēndra III

The reigns of Rājarāja III (A.D. 1216-1246) and Rājēndra III (A.D. 1246-1279) represent the last phase of the Chōḷa power. The central authority was openly defied and finally overthrown by the subordinate vassals as well as the newly rising Pāṇḍyan power. This period also witnessed the active interference of the Hoysāḷas, who tried to use the internal disunity and weakness to their advantage. Similarly, the Kākatiyas of Warangal also found it possible to occupy Kāñchipuram for some time. Rājarāja III, in particular, was a very weak monarch and during his time the Chōḷa power was put to great troubles by its own vassals. Thus, the Pāṇḍyas under Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I (acc. 1216) inflicted a crushing defeat on Rājarāja III, who had to abandon his capital. The Sanskrit work *Gadyakarnāmrta* and the Tiruvēndipuram inscriptions say that while the Chōḷa king was going away from his capital with his retinue, the Kāḍava chieftain Kōpperuñjinga attacked him and made him a prisoner.[33] This shocking news reached the Hoysāḷa king, Vīra Narasimha, who despatched his army under his able generals, who struck terror in the Kāḍava country and forced Kōpperuñjinga to release the Chōḷa monarch and restore him to the throne. The Hoysāḷa army did not stop with this; it further penetrated into the Pāṇḍya country and defeated the Pāṇḍyas at Mahēndramanḍalam and went as far south as Rāmēśwaram. This gave excellent opportunity for the Hoysāḷas to give effect to their designs of domination over the Tamil country and the Chōḷa country virtually became a protectorate of the Hoysāḷas during the time of Rājarāja III.[34] More than fifty inscriptions of Rājarāja III ranging from his fifth to twentyninth year are found at the Varadarājaswāmi temple and they clearly show the dominant role played by the Hoysāḷas and the Telugu-Chōḍa chieftains in the Kāñchi area.[35] The presence of the Hoysāḷa troops (*bhērunḍas*) at Kāñchi is attested by one of the inscriptions dated A.D. 1221.[36] A number of Hoysāḷa generals and officers also figure prominently in the epigraphs and they will be reviewed separately.

The general trends leading to the downfall of the Chōḷa-empire under Rājēndra III may be summed up here before a review of Kāñchi's association with the various dynasties like the Hoysāḷa, the Kākatiyas, and the Telugu-Chōḍas is taken up. Rājēndra III was more vigorous than his predecessors and he made a bold bid to salvage the reputation of the Chōḷa power by inflicting defeat on the Pāṇḍyan king Māravarman Sundara II and even made him acknowledge the overlordship of the Chōḷas. The Hoysāḷas who espoused the Chōḷa cause earlier now supported the Pāṇḍyas to redress the balance of power. This forced the Chōḷas to return to their allies the Telugu-Chōḍas for help. They were in active control of the areas round Nellore, Cuddappah and also Kāñchi. The Telugu-Chōḍa king even assumed the title of "Chōḷa-sthāpanāchārya", establisher of the Chōḷas. But with accession of the strong Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya II in A.D. 1251, events took a different turn. Under the admirable leadership of the great warrior, the Pāṇḍyas defeated the Chōḷas under Rājēndra III and the Hoysāḷas under Sōmēśvara. The latter was

killed in the battle at Kannanūr in A.D. 1264, and his successor Rāmanātha who came to the rescue of the Chōḷas was also defeated. Consequently, the Hoysāḷas were compelled to withdraw from the Tamil country, over which they had dominated for quite some time. Their power was now confined to the Mysore Plateau. The Chōḷa king Rājēndra III's latest regnal year was A.D. 1279, which also roughly marks the end of the Chōḷa rule in South India. The Chōḷa empire was completely absorbed in the Pāṇḍyan empire which extended upto Nellore in the north where he performed his Vīrābhishēka.[37] The feudatories of the Chōḷas ruling over Kāñchi now accepted the Pāṇḍyan overlordship.

We can now proceed to sketch the fortunes of Kāñchi city under various dynasties who came to importance in the wake of the disintegration of the Chōḷa empire.

Hoysāḷas in Kāñchi

It was already shown how the Hoysāḷas exploited the disunity prevailing in the Tamil country and played a dominant role there as protectors of the Chōḷa power. This is illustrated well in the epigraphs at Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple which mention the numerous Hoysāḷa *Mahāpradhānas*, *Dandanāyakas* or commanders and Sāmantas, who probably stayed at Kāñchi at this time. The stationing of the Hoysāḷa troops probably necessitated their visit to the city. These epigraphs dated between A.D. 1226 and 1240 i.e , contemporaneous with the reign of Vishnuvardhana Vīra Narasimha II and Vīra Sōmēśvara. In all these epigraphs the nominal overlordship of Rājarāja III Chōḷa is, however, acknowledged.[38]

Thus, we find Goppayya Daṇḍanāyaka, the famous general who along with Appanna led the Hoysāḷa forces victoriously into Tamil country also and subdued Kāḍava Kōpperuñjinga and restored Rājarāja III to the Chōḷa throne donating a village to Lord Varadarāja in A.D. 1231. He is described as the son of Mallayya Daṇḍanāyaka.[39] The two other Hoysāḷa generals who gave donations to this temple were Ammanna Daṇḍanāyaka and Mallappa Daṇḍanāyaka—both in the 14th year of Rājarāja III i.e., in A.D. 1230 when Vīra Narasimha was the Hoysāḷa king.[40] In A.D. 1234, Vīra Sōmēśvara came to the Hoysāḷa throne and during his time Polavi Dandanāyaka, Vallaiya Daṇḍanāyaka, both ministers, donated cows to the temple in 1235 and 1238 A.D.[41] The other ministers who made gifts to this temple were Mallappa Dandanāyaka and Goppayya Daṇḍanāyaka sons of Appayya Daṇḍanāyaka.[42] Another general Kēsava Daṇḍanāyaka who is described as the son of Mallayya also gave a grant to the temple. This was in the 24th year of Rājarāja III i.e., about A.D. 1240.[43]

The presence of the numerous generals and the Hoysāḷa army in Kāñchi clearly indicates that this area was virtually under the Hoysāḷa control, though the name of Rājarāja III was only nominally or formally mentioned in the epigraphs. Even this nominal mention is absent in one undated epigraph at the Varadarājaswāmi temple.[44] It eulogises king Sōmēśvara who descended from the family of Yādūs and that Devika, born of the Chāḷukya family, was his chief queen. The reference is obviously to the Hoysāḷa king Vīra Sōmēśvara who was killed by the Pāṇḍya king in the battle of Kannanūr (A.D. 1264) already referred to.

Kāñchi under the Telugu-Chōḍas

Prominent among the quasi-independent feudatories who had held Kāñchi city for

a considerable length of time were the Telugu-Chōdas of Nellore. The chronology and the genealogy of these rulers are not free from controversy. They seem to have traced their origin far back, including Karikāla Chōḷa as one of their ancestors. First, they were subordinates of the Chōḷas and having control probably over portions of land near Nellore and Kālahasti or Pottapi (near Chittoor). Hence, some of them had the title Pottapi-Chōḷa or Tirukkāḷattidēva. One of their ancestors Bēta was a feudatory of Vikrama Chōḷa. Bēṭa's son was Ērasiddha who had in turn three sons —Manmu Siddha I (*alias* Nalla Siddha), Bēṭa II and Tammu Siddha I.[45] They held a subordinate position under Kulōttunga III. An epigraph of the latter in the Varadarājaswāmi temple at Kāñchi mentions a gift by Peddarasa, son of Nalla Siddharasan who is given the title Madurāntaka Pottapi Chōḷan.[46] But, during the closing years of Kulōttunga's reign, Nalla Siddha advanced upon Kāñchi and captured it for a short time. This necessitated Kulōttunga to take a punitive expedition against him and recovered Kāñchi in A.D. 1196.[47] The Telugu-Chōḍas accepted his suzerainty for some time more. But the coming of the weak monarchs Rājarāja III and Rājēndra III gave them an excellent opportunity to strengthen their hold on Nellore-Kāñchi region with a quasi-independence status, owing only nominal allegiance to the Chōḷa overlord Even the nominal hold on Kāñchi disappeared in the time of Rājēndra III, whose inscriptions are virtually absent at Kāñchi.

But again in A.D. 1205 we have a record of Tammu Siddha I at Varadarājaswāmi temple which states that in Ś 1127, he anointed himself at Nellore and presented a village to Hasti Sailēśa or Lord of Hasti Hill at Kāñchi.[48]

Tikka I *alias* Tirukkāḷattidēva *alias* Gaṇḍagōpāla (c. 1223-1250)

After Nalla Siddha *alias* Manmu Siddha I came his younger brother Tammu Siddha to power in A.D. 1205. His three records are found at Kāñchi. His successor Tikka I *alias Āluntikka*-Kāḷatti I ruled between circa A.D. 1223 and 1250.[49] There are nearly twentyfive inscriptions of this chief at Varadarājaswāmi temple. Most of them are dated in the reign of Rājarāja III, whose nominal overlordship is ackonowledged by him.[50] His full name as it occurs in these epigraphs is Madurāntaka Pottappichōḷan Tirukkāḷattidēva *alias* Gaṇḍagōpālan. In an epigraph dated Ś 1153 (A.D. 1230) he claims to have captured Kāñchi.[51] But, as pointed out by Sewel, this "is a mere boast" for the most of his epigraphs he acknowledges the Chōḷa suzerainty.[52] However, there are a few epigraphs in which he cites his own regnal years as, for example, in an epigraph dated A.D. 1235.[53] From this, it appears that his claim to have captured Kāñchi was substantially true. He almost exercised independent authority in the grant of lands and villages to the Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ temple. He was an ardent devotee of this temple in which he instituted the service called *Gaṇḍagōpālan-sandi* (offerings) in the 15th year of Rājarāja III (A.D. 1230).[54] In the 17th year of the same king, the chief granted some villages for the maintenance of the *sandi* and conducting repairs to the temple. This was repeatedly maintained by grants given year after year.[55] He granted exemption of taxes for lands forming the flower-garden of the temple.[56] His several other gifts to this temple and other Vaishnavite temples are recorded.[57] His queen Lakshmīdēvi also made many gifts to our temple for maintaining garden, feeding-service etc. Lakshmīdēvi is described as the daughter of Vīra Narasiṅgadēva, probably the

Yādavarāya chief.[58] Tikka had a number of subordinate officers or *mudalis*[59] and servants[60] and handmaids.[61] He levied taxes on the oil-merchants. Boundary stones set up to mark the jurisdiction of lands bore the insignia of Gaṇḍagōpāla.[62] There was even a street named *Gaṇḍagōpālapperunderu.*[63] A village named Gaṇḍagōpālan-Chaturvēdímangalam is also mentioned.[64] All these show that he was the *de facto* ruler of Kāñchi.

It was during the time of Tikka I that the Hoysāḷas were becoming strong in the Tamil country. The inscriptions describing their dominance at Kāñchi noticed earlier were dated in this period i.e., between A.D. 1226 and 1240. But later, the Telugu-Chōdas seem to have asserted themselves and according to the introductory verses of Tikkana Sōmayāji's *Nirvacanōttara Rāmāyanamu,* the Telugu-Chōḍa chief Tikka I subdued the Hoysāḷa ruler Sōmeśvara and established the Chōḷa in his position and earned for himself the title *Chōlasthāpanāchāryā.* This is confirmed by a Hoysāḷa epigraph dated Ś 1162 (A.D. 1240) which mentions Sōmēśvara's expedition against Gaṇḍagōpāla.[65] Perhaps, this was one of the reasons why the Hoysāḷas withdrew from the Kāñchi area and they are not heard of so frequently in this place after A.D. 1240. Tikka I continued to be a Chōḷa feudatory in charge of Kāñchi until 1249 when Kākatiya Gaṇapati captured Kāñchi, as attested by the presence of his epigraph dated in June 8th, 1249.[66] The Telugu-Chōḍas apparently transferred their allegiance to the Kākatiyas. In A.D. 1250 Manma Siddha II succeeded his father Tikka I.[67] An inscription at Nandalūr makes it clear that Gaṇapati and Manma Siddha were on friendly terms.[68]

Manma Siddha II Vijaya Gaṇḍagōpāla

His full name as it occurs in the inscription is Tribhuvanachakravarthi Vijaya Gaṇḍagōpāladēva. He called himself the Lord of Kāñchi. His rule commenced in A.D. 1250 and he seems to have been "practically, if not actually, independent".[69] But his rule between 1250 and 1291 witnessed crucial developments. Kāñchi changed hands in rapid succession among the Telugu-Chōḍas, the Kākatiyas, the Kāḍava Kōpperuñjinga and Pāṇḍyas. But the change of rule often meant only the *de jure* change of the overlords. Vijaya Gaṇḍagōpāla seems to have continued as the local chieftain directly in charge of Kāñchi. His reign was coeval with Rājēndra III, Jaṭāvarman Sundara-Pāndya, Kōpperuñjinga and Kākatiya Gaṇapati. His epigraphs numbering above 20 and issued in his own regnal years ranging from 2nd to 31st year are found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple i.e., between 1253 and 1291.[70] But this long rule was frequently interrupted by external intrusions. For example, Kōpperuñjinga is recognised as the ruler of Kāñchi in A.D. 1253-1254 and again in May 1257 and once again in 1260.[71] Curiously, in the same years, Vijaya-Gaṇḍagōpāla is also recognised as the ruler.[72] This may not only show the rapid changes in the political fortunes of Kāñchi but also perhaps show that at one time the rival kings were "severally supported by their adherents".[73] Another important feature during this time was the rising power of the Pāṇḍyas, who superseded the Chōḷas and penetrated into the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. A number of inscriptions of Jaṭāvarman II are found in Chingleput district dated A.D. 1258 and 1259. In 1260, he overran Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla's territory and marched as far as Nellore where he performed his *vīrābhishēka.*[74] He anointed himself at Kāñchi also. His inscriptions dated in A.D. 1256 and

1266 are found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple and these will be reviewed in a later context. We do not have a clear idea about Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla's position *vis-a-vis* the Pāndyan king. Probably, he now functioned as the latter's feudatory. But we find the Telugu-Chōḍa's inscriptions continuously issued in his own regnal years right upto A.D. 1291 and several of them are found in the Varadarājaswāmi temple.[75]

Like Tikka, Tribhuvanachakravarthi Vijaya Gandagōpāla had his subordinate officers. One of them was Nalla Siddharasan who figures with high sounding titles in an epigraph at Varadarājaswāmi temple.[76] It records a donation of a number of villages for instituting a service called *Rāhuttarāyan-Sandi* called after the donor who bears titles like Pallava-kulatilaka, Rājaparamēśvara, Mukkanḍi Kāḍuveṭṭivamsāvatāra, while the title Rāhuttarāyan might show that he was 'the lord of the horsemen', his other titles may suggest that he was a Telugu-Pallava.[77] Another epigraph in the same temple clearly refers to his Nalla Siddha as subordinate to Vijaya Gaṇḍagōpāla.[78] One interesting fact, that has come to light from the inscriptions of this chief at Kāñchi, is that a number of Nāyakas evidently chieftains from Malaimaṇḍalam, figure frequently as donors to the Varadarājaswāmi temple. Thus, we have the grants of Srikumāran, a member of Nayakanmar of Malaimaṇḍalam in A.D. 1254, two other Nāyakas in A.D. 1257 and 1265 and another Rāmanakkan Nāyaka of Malaimaṇḍalam in 1271.[79] Malaimaṇḍalam is evidently a reference to Malainādu or the hilly tract of the West Coast.[80] We know that Jaṭāvarman Sundara the great Pāṇḍyan king invaded Malaināḍu and defeated the Chēra king. It is possible that many of the military chiefs or *nāyakas* from the Chēra country accompanied the Pāṇḍyan army in its campaign in Tonḍaimaṇḍalam. It is interesting to note in this connection that there is a street named Malayāḷa-street in Vishnu-Kāñchi. Probably, some of the Nāyakas and merchants of Malayāḷa-dēsa or Malaimaṇḍalam had settled here.

Vīra Gaṇḍagōpāla

The next Telugu-Chōḍa chieftain who figures in our inscriptions is one Vīra Gaṇḍagōpāla who is identified by Sewel as Manmu Siddha III.[81] His accession took place sometime late in A.D. 1290 or beginning of 1291. He is represented by only one epigraph dated in his 3rd regnal year corresponding to A.D. 1294.[82] His inscriptions immediately after this are not found at Kāñchi. Perhaps he had lost hold of the city and regained it in A.D. 1297 when he ruled as a vassal of Kākatiya king Pratāparudradēva II.[83]

Kāḍava Kōpperuñjinga at Kāñchi

Another important feudatory power which shot into prominence in the 13th century was the Kādavarāya family, claiming descent from the ancient Pallava family. It was working its way up from the days of Vikramachōḷa. But it was under Kōpperuñjinga (circa 1229-1278), the Kāḍava power rose to a position of an independent power, though only for a short time. Kōpperuñjinga was in charge of the South Arcot region with his capital at Sēndamangalam. As pointed out earlier, he utilised the weak rule of Rājarāja III to strengthen himself. When the Pāṇḍya king Māravarman Sundara I invaded the Chōḷa empire and defeated its king Rājarāja III, Kōpperuñjinga rebelled against his overlord and even took him a cap-

tive and only released him due to Hoysāḷa invasion of the Kāḍava country. The defeat of Kōpperuñjinga at the hands of the Hoysāḷa Narasimha in 1230-1231 curbed the Kāḍava's ambition only temporarily. He acknowledged the Chōḷa overlordship perhaps only upto the year A.D. 1243; from that year onwards, his inscriptions are recorded in his own regnal years which might mean that he became more or less an independent power.[84] Later on, Kōpperuñjinga scored a victory over Sōmēśvara and then went upto Kāñchi, which was then under the control of Kākatiya Gaṇapati and his feudatory Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla. This Kāñchi expedition took place sometime around 1253 as an inscription of Kōpperuñjinga of that date is found at Varadarājaswāmi temple, Kāñchi.[85] His other inscriptions at the temple are dated in his 11th, 12th, 15th, 18th, 19th and 20th years i e., dates ranging from 1253 to 1262 A.D.[86] He is called in all these inscriptions as 'Sakalabhuvanachakravartin'. In this expedition, he was helped by his son Kāḍavan Kumaran who is eulogised as the Lord of Mallai, Mayilai, Kāñchi and Tuṇḍahanāḍu (Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam).[87]

But Kōpperuñjinga's sway over Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam was ended by the strong Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya I, who decisively defeated him after A.D. 1264. From then Kōpperuñjinga became a subordinate ally of the Pāṇḍyan king and even assisted him in his expedition to the north. With the death of Kōpperuñjinga, the Kāḍava power, for all practical purposes, ceased to be a force.[88]

His inscriptions mention two Nīlagangarayans, one Koḍakkōn Nīlagangarayan and another Aruṇagiri Perumāḷ Nīlagangarayan son of Pañchanadivānan Nīlagangarayan and their gifts to the Varadarājaswāmi temple.[89] They were probably local officers or agents. Another Nāyak's (of Malaimaṇḍalam) gift is recorded in an inscription.[90]

Eastern Ganga interlude at Kāñchi

The two inscriptions mentioning gifts by the Ganga king Anangabhīma III and his queen Sōmaḷādēvi Mahādēvi to Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ temple are interesting.[91] One of them is dated the 19th year of the reign of Anantavarma Mahita-dēva of the Ganga family (i.e., Anangabhīma III). The date of this inscription corresponds to A.D 1230. It records a gift of the village Udaiyakāmam in Anantarudra-Vishaya by Sōmaḷādēvi Mahādēvi for offerings and worship to God Allālanātha while she was at Abhinava-vāranasi, the modern Cuttack in Orissa which was the capital of the Eastern Gangas The second inscription records a gift of 128 cows and four bulls by the same king and dated in the 20th year of Rājarāja III, which corresponds to A.D. 1235. Regarding the latter inscription, there is no controversy. But the first inscription dated in the regnal year of the Ganga king has led Dr. Mahalingam to postulate an intrusion of the Eastern Ganga forces into Tamilnād.[92] According to him, the Eastern Ganga army entered Kāñchipuram and occupied it for a short time and was later driven out by the Hoysāḷa Narasimha II. He tries to identify the foreign troops (mlēchchadēsa) that helped the Kāḍava during his attack on Rājarāja III as the Eastern Ganga forces. Later on, according to him, the Eastern Ganga forces were driven out by the Hoysāḷa king Vīra Narasimha, who claims, in his epigraphs that he pursued the "Trikalinga" forces which he identifies with the Eastern Ganga forces. In another inscription at Kāñchi itself mention is made of Vīra Narasimha's invasion and uprooting of the Magara kingdom (*Magara-rājyam nirmū-*

lya), his setting up of the Chōḷa king who had sought his protection and his stationing at Kāñchipuram of the army of the *bhērundas* (probably a regiment) for uprooting the evil-doers (*dushṭanirmūlam artham tatra bhērunda varggam sthāpayitva*). He thinks that the *dushṭa* element at Kāñchipuram was none other than the Trikalinga army. All this, he believes, occurred in A.D. 1230.[93] But Dr. Sircar does not agree with this view and states that the Eastern Ganga army could not have penetrated as far south as Kāñchi without conquering thousands of square miles of the Kākatiya territory that lay north of the Chōḷa territory and there is absolutely no proof to show that Anangabhīma III was ever engaged in a successful war with Gaṇapati. He also states that Hoysāḷa Vīra Narasimha II was in possession of Kāñchi even in March 1229 A.D., whereas the Eastern Ganga inscription is dated A.D. 1230. He says that it is thus very difficult to believe that the place was occupied by the army of Anangabhīma III in 1230 A.D. He thinks that the Hoysāḷa's claim against Trikalinga forces may be as empty a boast as his other claim regarding the conquest of the Vındhyan region. Dr. Sircar further surmises that Sōmaḷādēvi, the wife of the Eastern Ganga king, was probably the sister or daughter of the Chōḷa king Rājarāja III through a Hoysāḷa princess and hence, the presence of the Eastern Ganga inscription recording a pious gift does not imply any political conquest.[94]

Kāñchi under the Pāṇḍyas

It was shown that the Pāṇḍyan power under the great warrior Jaṭāvarman Sundara I launched on an ambitious policy of expansion which met with splendid success. He defeated the Chōḷa king Rājēndra III, Hoysāḷa power under Sōmēśvara, Kāḍava Kōpperuñjinga, Telugu-Chōḍa Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla and the Kākatiya Gaṇapati (both of whom he killed). He performed his '*vīrābhishēka*' at Nellore and Kāñchi became his second capital.[95] He gloried the new conquests by assuming titles *Kāñchīpura-Varadhīśvara* and *Kāñchīpuram Kōṇḍān*.[96] The erstwhile feudatories of the Chōḷas now transferred their allegiance to their new master. The Pāṇḍyan sway over Kāñchi is well attested by their inscriptions found in the temples of Kāñchi. Thus, Jatāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya's inscriptions dated in his 5th and 15th (i.e., A.D. 1256-1266) regnal years are found in Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple.[97] One of them, a grant to the temple by Soliyadaraiyan of Uttamapāṇḍyanallūr in Pāṇḍyanāḍu[98] while another records a gıft by Madhusūdan Āpatsahāyan *alias* Rāmachandradēva from Sērmādēvi in Pāṇḍimaṇḍalam.[99] He was probably a military officer or chieftain and hence, the village gifted by him was named after himself as Āpatsahāyanallūr.

The next Pāṇḍyan king represented in the inscriptions of the Varadarājaswāmi temple is Jaṭāvarman Vīra Pāṇḍya in his 8th regnal year, which may correspond to A.D. 1261.[100] Probably, he was co-regent with Jaṭāvarman Sundara for some time and succeeded him later.[101]

But, at the same time, we cannot say that the Pāṇḍyan control of the territory around Kāñchi was by any means firm. This is clearly seen in the existence of many inscriptions issued in Telugu-Chōḍa chieftains. To cite a few examples, we have inscription of Manmu Siddha II Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla from 1265 to 1291 at Varadarājaswāmi temple,[102] though an inscription of Jaṭāvarman Sundara II is found as far north as Cuddapah in 1286.[103] Probably, this means that the Telugu-Chōḍas

long the Kākatiya overlordship of Kāñchi continued. Probably, political uncertainty that prevailed in this region and indeed in Tamilnād was further aggravated by another Muslim invasion in A.D. 1327. This time the army of Muhammad Bin Tuglak after overcoming the Deccan marched against the Hoysāḷa capital Dwārasamudra and caused considerable damage and marched further south and captured Madurai 'This led in the first instance to the establishment of a garrison in Madurai and later to the creation of a Sultanate there'. This rule, which was marked by oppression, lasted to about A.D. 1371. But meanwhile, Ballāḷa III, the Hoysāḷa king, vacated the capital Dwārasamudra and settled at Tiruvannamalai sometime in A D. 1328. From there, he was operating against the Madura Sultans. In A.D. 1335, Jalal-ud-din revolted against his Delhi overlord and set up his independence. This estrangement between the Muslim powers was taken advantage of by the Hoysāḷa king Ballāḷa III who strengthened himself in the South Arcot-Coimbatore region. It was during this time probably the Hoysāḷa made a short visit to Kāñchi. His inscription at Varadarājaswāmi temple dated in A.D. 1335 mentions that Vīra-Vallabadēva was camping at Kāñchi and that his minister or chief Kampayya Dannāyaka made a grant to the temple.[111] Another undated epigraph records that the Hoysāḷa king and his queens visited this temple where they were seated on a throne called (after the king) *Vīra-Vallāladēvan* and under the canopy called *Ariyannavallālan*.[112] These inscriptions would clearly indicate that Ballāḷa's sway extended however briefly to the Kāñchi region. The years between A.D. 1335 and 1342 were of great activity for Ballāḷa in consolidating the Hoysāḷa hold and making it a bulwark of attack on the Muslim power of Madurai. With the huge army he encamped at Tiruchirāppaḷḷi and fought a battle with the Muslim powers. But in spite of initial successes, this battle proved disastrous for Ballāḷa who was first taken prisoner and later killed mercilessly in A.D. 1342. The Hoysāḷa power did not recover from this blow. It survived for a year more under Ballāḷa IV and later about A.D. 1346 was overrun by the victorious Vijayanagar power.[113]

Kāñchi under Sāmbūvarāyas

The Sāmbūvarāyas were originally chieftains under the Chōḷas who were powerful in some portions of the North Arcot and Chingleput regions. As far as Kāñchi was concerned they could not make much headway towards it so long as the Telugu-Chōḍas were in control of it. During the time of Kulōttunga III, one of them Ammaiappan Kunnudaipperumāḷ *alias* Vikrama Chōḷa Sāmbūvarāyan figures as a donor to the temple of Varadarājaswāmi.[114] Later, in A.D. 1247 during the time of Rājarāja III, another chieftain Vīraperumāḷ Edirili Chōḷa Sāmbūvarāyan *alias* Rājarāja Sāmbūvarāyan donated lands for worship and offerings. He instituted a service, *Āḷappirandān-Sandi* named after his title.[115] All these attest to their subordinate position. But, later we have an inscription issued in the name of Champa, son of Vīra-Chōḷa and dated A.D. 1314. Probably, he was Vīra-Champarāya *alias* Sāmbūvarāya who figures in the inscriptions in North Arcot as a subordinate of the new conqueror Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya.[116] Subsequently, when the Pāṇḍyan and the Telugu-Chōḍa and Hoysāḷa powers were on the decline in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam the Sāmbūvarāya chiefs were in charge of the area till they were overrun by the Vijayanagar power. Two of them viz., Venrumankoṇḍa Sāmbūvarāya (acc. A.D.

1322) and Rājanārāyaṇa Sāmbūvarāya (acc. A.D. 1337) ruled independently. The latter's inscriptions dated in 7th and 14th regnal years are found in our temple.[117]

Kāñchi under the Vijayanagar rule

Meanwhile, the newly rising Vijayanagar power was making rapid strides. The Udayagiri-rājya, one of the provinces of the kingdom, bordered on the Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam region. That province was under Sāyana-Uḍaiyār, the son of Kampana I in Ś 1273 (A.D. 1352).[118] A few of his inscriptions are found in Kāñchi and also the area north of it.[119] This marks the slow beginning of the spread of the Vijayanagar authority in the Tamil country. This extension of the Vijayanagar power was well established after the brilliant victory scored by Kumāra Kampana, the son of Bukka, over the Sāmbūvarāya and the capture of his fort at Rājagambhīram in A.D. 1361. He entered Kāñchi triumphantly and proceeded further south and crushed the Sultanate of Madurai. The conquest of Madurai and Kampana's triumphal march formed the theme for an epic poem *Madura vijayam* by his wife Gangādēvi.[120] As symbolic of the revival of the Hindu power, the image of Ranganātha at Srīrangam, which had been removed for safety earlier, was reinstalled. In his southern campaign, Kampana was ably assisted by two generals Gōpanna and Sāḷuva Mangu. The latter figures in two inscriptions at Varadarājaswāmi temple, one of which mentions that his *pradhāni* or chief Pettarasan was authorised to levy certain taxes.[121] Kampana's inscription dated A.D. 1364 is found at the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchi where he reinstated worship which was abandoned since long.[122] His inscription dated Ś 1288 (A.D. 1367) is found at the Varadarājaswāmi temple.[123] Many more of his epigraphs are found in other parts of Tamil country like Chingleput, South Arcot District.[124] Kampana II died in A.D. 1374 while his father Bukka I continued to rule till 1377. The latter was succeeded by his son Harihara II who ruled from 1377 to 1404.

Harihara II (A.D. 1377-1404)

His authority extended to a considerable portion of South India including the Mysore and the whole of the Tamil country. Four of his inscriptions are found in our temple at Kāñchi. Two of them are dated Ś 1300 (A.D. 1378).[125] Another dated Ś 1325 (A.D. 1403) informs us that the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region continued to be called Jayamgoṇḍasōḷamaṇḍalam, a name given to it in the time of Rājarāja I.[126] Another records his grant of a village to a Vaishnava *maṭha* in our temple.[127]

After Harihara's death, in about A.D. 1404, there was a succession dispute between his surviving sons. Virūpāksha I first succeeded in securing the throne between A.D. 1404 and 1405. In his time, according to Nuniz, 'Coromandel' rebelled against the Vijayanagar authority and Virūpāksha had to re-conquer the provinces of Tuṇḍira (Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam), the Chōḷa and Pāṇḍyas. This account of Nuniz is confirmed by other sources also.[128] But Virūpāksha's rule was soon cut short by his brother Bukka II who ejected him and ruled the kingdom between A.D. 1405 and 1406. After him, his brother Dēvarāya I became the king and ruled till 1422. The inscriptions of all the three brothers are found in the District of Chingleput, though none at Varadarājaswāmi temple.

The next Vijayanagar ruler Dēvarāya II ruled between A.D. 1422 to 1446. His authority spread far and wide. Razak and Nuniz, two contemporary writers, testify to the fact that Dēvarāya was supreme over the whole of South India and that his dominion even spread to Quilon and Ceylon in the South. But his relations with the kingdoms of Orissa and Bāhmini continued to be hostile. His inscriptions have been found in the neighbourhood of Kāñchi, though none in our temple.[129] There is some ground to suspect that Kāñchi city was temporarily captured by the Vēlama chieftain Vasantarāya whose inscription is found in our temple.

Vēlama Intrusion

During the early years of the reign of Dēvarāya II, the Vēlama Nāyaks remained friendly. When Bāhmini Sultan Ahmad Shah declared war on Vijayanagar about A.D. 1424, the latter under Dēvarāya obtained considerable help from them. The Nāyak Anapōta II promptly despatched his forces to the battle-field under Linga. But due to some reasons which are not clear, he withdrew the help in the middle. This allegedly treacherous conduct prompted the Vijayanagar king Dēvarāya II to send help to the Reḍḍis of Rajamundry in their fight against the Vēlama general Linga. This widened the gap between the Vijayanagar and the Vēlama power. Thereafter, Linga made a series of attacks on the different portions of the Vijayanagar empire like Nāgārjunakonḍa, Konḍavīḍu etc. He also directed his attention towards south, subdued Nellore chieftain and even came as far as Kāñchi. An inscription of A.D. 1437 which registers a gift of two Dwārapāla images to Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ temple of Kāñchi by Recerla Vasantarāya, son of Anapōta II and the younger brother of Singa III *alias* Sarvajña points to the presence of Vēlama forces in the neighbourhood of the city.[130]

Dēvarāya II was succeeded by Vijaya Rāya II (1446-47) and shortly after, by his son, Mallikārjuna, who ruled between 1447 and 1465. The period of Mallikārjuna's rule was one of great difficulty for the Vijayanagar empire as it came to be threatened by the combined forces of the Bāhmini king, Muhammad II and the Orissa king, Kapilēśvara Gajapati. The Vijayanagar armies were defeated and important forts of Konḍavīḍu, Vinukonḍa and Addanki were captured. The Orissa army under Hamavīra assisted by Kapilēśvara, marched into the southern regions as well, in A.D. 1463. It captured important places like Udayagiri, Chandragiri, Paḍaivīdu, Kāñchi, Tiruvārur and Tiruchirāppaḷḷi.[131] The expedition was a grand success. But the conquering force was compelled to retrace its steps within two years. The Oriya expedition of the South was thus only a sudden raid which disappeared as quickly as it came, so that we find Mallikārjuna's rule being recognised again in Tonḍaimanḍalam in A.D. 1465. There is one inscription of Mallikārjunadēva at Varadarāja temple dated A.D. 1465.[132]

After Mallikārjuna, the Vijayanagar throne passed on to his cousin Virūpāksha II, who ruled between A.D. 1465-1485. His inscriptions dated A.D. 1467 and 1471 are found at Kāñchi.[133]

The former epigraph informs us that there was a Paḍaipaṟṟu or military station of the Vijayanagar army at Tēpperumāḷnallūr, near Kāñchi. According to this epigraph the village Tēpperumāḷnallūr (called after Tēpperumāḷ i.e., Dēvapperumāḷ,

another name of Lord Varadarāja), as Padaipaṟṟu. It was evidently a military station or cantonment where the Vijayanagar forces were stationed.

The Gajapatis of Orissa rose up again to threaten the Vijayanagar empire. They marched southward along the Coromandel Coast as far as Kāñchipuram.[134] It was at this critical time that the Vijayanagar empire was saved by the Sāḷuva Narasimha, the powerful Vijayanagar Viceroy, who along with his trusted generals, beat the invaders back upto Rajamundry in A.D. 1474-75. But some years later, about 1480, the Bāhmini Sultan Muhammad Shah invaded the South. Firishta tells us that the Sultan received information about the richress and grandeur of the temples at the Hindu city, Kāñchi, which was said to be of only ten days' journey from Koṇḍavīḍu, his camping place.[135] He invaded Kāñchi and looted much of its wealth. Sāḷuva Narasimha sent his general Īśvara Nāyaka to Kāñchi, who successfully drove the Sultan out of Kāñchi and even managed to recapture much of the booty which the Sultan had collected by plunder of Kāñchi.[136]

Virūpāksha's rule ended in 1485. He was killed by his eldest son who in turn was killed by his younger brother. This state of confusion was the most opportune moment for Sāḷuva Narasimha, the powerful subordinate of Vijayanagar empire, to usurp the throne, which he did in 1486. Till then, he was only a governor in charge of the modern districts of South Arcot, North Arcot and Chingleput,[137] with his headquarters at Chandragiri. This usurpation which is called the First Usurpation marked the replacement of the Sangama dynasty by the new Sāḷuva line of kings over the Vijayanagar throne. Sāḷuva Narasimha was quite an able king. He recovered most of the revolted provinces during his six years rule. Though he could not recover Raichur Doab from the Bāhminis and Udayagiri from the king of Orissa, Sāḷuva Narasimha's hold over the Tamil country was quite intact. He was a great devotee of Vishnu and during his time, the Vishnu temple of Tirupati and Kāñchi received great many benefactions. He had the services of a dynamic Srī-Vaishnava leader named Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Iyengār, who utilised the royal benefactions for various charitable and religious purposes at Tirupati, Srīrangam and Kāñchi.[138] His epigraphs dated A.D. 1486 and 1487 are found in our temple.[139]

After the death of Sāḷuva Narasimha in 1491, his son Immaḍi Narasimha succeeded to the throne. He was however put to death sometime in 1505. His general Narasa Nāyaka now seized the throne and from him started the Tuḷuva line. Shortly afterwards, Narasa died. He was succeeded by his son Vīra Narasimha (A.D. 1505 to 1509). His inscription dated April 1509 is found on the east wall of the *Abhishēka-maṇḍapa* of the Varadarājaswāmi temple.[140] It records a gift of a village called Narasingarāyapuram, evidently called after Vīra Narasimha. The latter was succeeded by his able and strong brother Krishnadēva Rāya, who ruled between A.D. 1509-1529.

Krishnadēva Rāya (A.D. 1509-1529)

The reign of Krishnadēva Rāya is a landmark in the history of South India. Under him, the Vijayanagar empire was at the zenith of its power and glory. It included practically the whole of South India. By his military prowess he made his authority felt by the rebel chieftains of Ummattūr, the Gajapatis of Orissa, Sultan Muhammad II of Bāhmini and the Sultan of Bijapur. Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam and the

rest of the Tamil country were so quiet and calm, that Krishnadēva Rāya could not only fully divert his attention to his arduous wars with the Gajapati, but also could pay frequent visits to holy places like Tirupati, Kālahasti and Kāñchi.[141] As many as 16 inscriptions of Krishnadēva Rāya are found at the Varadarājaswāmi temple ranging between Ś 1431 to Ś 1451 (A.D. 1510-1528). Two of these inscriptions give us a complete list of his conquests prior to Ś 1438.[142] After the conquests, the king made a religious tour of the South and halted at Kāñchi and visited Varadarājaswāmi temple. He made benefactions for the merit of his father Narasa Nāyaka and his mother Nāgaladēvi. This grant was recorded in three languages viz., Tamil, Telugu and Kannaḍa.[143] These inscriptions begin with the usual historical introduction in Sanskrit and give the genealogy of the Tuḷuva dynasty from Īśvara down to Krishnadēva Rāya. An epigraph mentions a gift by an official *adhikāram* Rāyasam Ayyapparasayyar, son of Gottimukku Tipparasar of Bharadvāja-gōtra.[144] Another epigraph dated Ś 1446 mentions a gift of jewelled pendant to God by another officer Rāyasam Srīpātayya.[145] The latter's local agent one Narapparasayya also made gifts.[146] In Ś 1438 the king himself gave five villages yielding an annual income of 1,500 varahas as gift.[147]

Three months later, Krishnadēva Rāya again visited Kāñchi perhaps on his way back to his capital and gave donations to Varadarājaswāmi and Ekāmbarēśvarar temples at Kāñchi.[148]

Achyutadēva Rāya (A.D. 1530-1542)

Krishnadēva Rāya was succeeded by his brother Achyuta Rāyā in A.D. 1529 and nearly 23 inscriptions of his are found at Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, their dates ranging from Ś 1450 to Ś 1463 (i.e., from A.D. 1530 to 1542).[149] He performed his coronation at Tirupati. A record at Kāñchi dated A.D. 1533 states that soon after his coronation in the year Virodhi (1529-30), the king directed his local agent at Kāñchi, Sāḷuva Nāyaka, to distribute his gifts of villages equally between the temples of Varadarāja and Ekāmbarēśvarar in the city of Kāñchipuram in Chandragiri-rājya.[150] But the latter failed in his trust and allotted more to the Siva temple. When this irregularity was brought to the notice of the king while he was at Kāñchi, he ordered a revised allocation to be made and had the necessary documents drawn up in his presence. An earlier record of the year Ś 1454 (A.D. 1532) states that Achyuta Rāya visited Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple in the company of his wife Varadadēvi Amman and his son Kumāra Vēnkaṭādri. During the occasion he made enormous gifts including 17 villages and a thousand cows. He also performed '*Mukta-thulābhāra*' by weighing himself against pearls. This is inscribed in three languages, Tamil, Telugu and Kannaḍa.[151] The Sanskrit historical poem *Achyutarāyabhyudayam* also refers to this event. It says that Achyuta in the course of his expedition to the Tamil country to quell the rebellious governor Chellappā, visited holy places like Tirupati and Kālahasti and from there he "proceeded with his army to Kāñchi".[152] Then the king weighed himself against pearls which were distributed for charity. While at Kāñchi several forest kings (*kirātas*) waited upon him with tribute and presents. Accompanied by them he proceeded further south and went to Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. After worshipping the God of the place, he entered the Chōḷa country and, after a few days march, reached

Srīrangam. Having stayed there for some time, he intended proceeding further on his expedition, when one of his officers told him that it was not necessary for the king to go against a small chief like Chellappā and requested that he might be entrusted with the expedition.[153] Chellappā referred to in the poem was Sāḷuva Nāyaka or Sāḷuva Narasimha, who served as governor of the Tamil provinces under Krishnadēva Rāya. He was probably a native of Kāñchipuram. An inscription from Kunnattūr dated in the time of Krishnadēva Rāya (A.D. 1510) informs us that Sāḷuva Nāyakkar Sellappar was the son of Tirukkalaindān Bhaṭṭa, a *Dēvakanmi* of the temple of Tiruvēkambamuḍaya Nāyinār (Ekāmbarēśvarar temple) at Kāñchipuram.[154] During Achyuta's time he became rebellious and defied the Vijayanagar authority. It was the same Sāḷuva Nāyaka who was also responsible for the irregularity in the distribution of lands between Varadarāja and Ekāmbarēśvarar temples, which the king himself had to set right during his visit to the city. But when Achyuta's forces entered deep into Tamilnād, Sellappa fled to Tiruvaḍi rājya. He was pursued even there by Achyuta's brother-in-law. He defeated the local king who gave protection to Sellappa and brought both of them as prisoners.[155]

One officer by name Kumāra Dannāyaka is mentioned as having made gifts to the temple for the merit of Rāyasam Narasayya, the son of Virūpāksha Dannāyaka.[156]

Achyuta's reign also witnessed the growth of resentment amongst many of the subordinate viceroys of the Vijayanagar empire like the Nāyak of Madura. Some of them joined Rāmarāya, Tirumala and Vēnkaṭa of the Aravīḍu family as against the influential nephews of Achyutarāya. This consequently plunged the country into troubles.

Sadāśiva (A.D. 1542-1576)

Achyuta was succeeded by his son Vēnkaṭa I in 1541 but a few months' later, he was murdered by his maternal uncle Salakarāju Tirumala who seized the throne. The latter's tyrannical rule was however cut short by Sadāśiva who ruled between A.D. 1542 and 1576. Quite a number of Sadāśiva's records are found at the Varadarājaswāmi temple, their dates ranging from Ś 1466 to Ś 1484 (i.e., A.D. 1544-1562).[157] Sadāśiva was a weak monarch and so his reign was dominated by his able minister Rāma Rāya who wielded all the power and was indeed the *de facto* ruler of the kingdom. Sadāśiva is even said to have been imprisoned and later exhibited to the people once a year.[158] But this great power he wielded and his interference in the affairs of the Sultanates of Deccan alienated the latter and brought about the disastrous battle of Talikotta in A.D. 1565. The battle ended in utter defeat of the Vijayanagar army. Rāma Rāya was taken prisoner and put to death. Rāma Rāya's brother Tirumala made good his escape and also took Sadāśiva his sovereign as captive.

An important feature of Sadāśiva's reign was the domination of the realm by his kinsmen and other chieftains. He replaced the old nobility and elevated his own brothers, cousins and nephews to high posts of chieftainship. They were mostly of the Āravīḍu or Telugu-Choḍa families. This is very well borne out by his inscriptions at Varadarāja temple in which his numerous powerful chieftains are mentioned with high-sounding titles. They are :

1. *Matli Varadarāju* : He was one of the important chiefs of the Matli-family

who claimed descent from the Dēva-Choḍa family of the Solar race. He is described as the son of Sōmarāja. Like Aliya Rāmarāya, Varadarāja was also the son-in-law of Krishnadēva Rāya having married the latter's daughter Krishnamma. Varadarāja is described in an epigraph as Kāvēri-Vallabha, Katikasurahara, Gajasimha etc.[159] His grants to the Vishnu shrine at Tirupati figure in the inscriptions at Tirupati. He made cash award to our temple in A.D. 1544.[160]

2. *Sūrappa Nāyaka* : He was probably the same as Aḍaippam Sūrappa-Nāyaka, the son of Potṭu or Pottappa Nāyaka of Kāśyapa-gōtra, Āpastambha sūtra and yajus-śāki. He seems to have been an agent (*Kāryakarta*) of Sadāśiva and exercised authority over Tiruvaḍi-rājya or South Arcot region, where he did numerous benefactions to temples of Eṇṇāyiram, Sembēḍu etc.[161] He purchased a village and donated it to this temple in A.D. 1548.[162]
3. *Rangayyasōla Mahārāja* : He is described as the son of Chalikyadēva Chōḷa-Mahārāya of Kāśyapa-gōtra, Āpastambha sūtra and of Solar race.[163] The income from a village was entrusted to him for making certain offerings in the temple. This was in A.D. 1551.
4. *Tiruppadirāja* : He gave a grant to the temple for the merit of his parents, Mahāmandalēśwara Chinnayyadēva Mahārāja and Akkamma.[164] Probably, the former is to be identified with Chinna Timmayyadēva-Mahārāja, the third son of Pottapati-Timmarāja of the Āravīḍu family who was in charge of the Chandragiri rājya.[165]
5. *Rāmarāju Chinna Timmayyadēva Mahārāja* : A record dated A.D. 1549 says that he was to conduct all charities.[166] His agent Gopinayaningaru gave gifts in his merit.[167] His two Daḷavāys, Kuppa Nāyakar and Timmarāja, also gave gifts.[167a]
6. *Daḷavāy Timmarāja* : He was an agent under Mahāmanḍalēśwara Rāmarāja Chinna Timmarāja who had his headquarters at Sengalinirpatru Sīrmai (the modern Chingleput town). He gave a village in his province as gift to Varadarāja temple.[168]
7. *Rāmarāja, son of Mahāmanḍaleśwara Chikkayyarāja of Araviti* : As the name itself implies he belongs to the Āravīḍu family. He is stated to have been in charge of the conduct of annual festivals at Kāñchi.[169] This record is datable to A.D. 1558.
8. *Rāyasam Vēnkaṭādri* : Mentioned as son of Mōsilanādugu Timmarāja. He was assigned the income from certain villages on interest for providing offerings.[170] From the T.T.D. inscriptions we know that Vēnkatādri was the grandson of Mōsalimadugu Vīramarāja of Haritasa-gōtra, Āpastambha-sūtra and yajus-śāki. Vēnkatādri served Achyutarāya as his *rāyasam* or secretary while his father Timmarāja was a minister of the crown during the same reign.[171] From Tirupati inscriptions we know that both father and son continued to serve Sadāśiva and made large gifts to the Tirupati temple.[172]
9. *Rāja Rāmarāju Ayyan* : An inscription dated Ś 1466 (A.D. 1544) mentions certain charities made for his merits.[173] Aliya Rāmarāja was often referred to in inscriptions as Rājarāmarāju Ayyan.[174]

10. *Nāgarāja*: Nāgarāja son of Kaḍappai Siddharāja of Atrēya-gōtra and the lunar race was the brother of Siddhirāju Srī Rangarāya who is perhaps identical with the agent of Yara Tirumalarājayya who was in charge of the Koṇḍavīḍu area.[175]

Thus, so far as this temple was concerned, it was a bright period as it received large benefactions from the nobles and chieftains in the form of money, lands and villages for conducting many festivals like Garden-festival, repairs to the Poṟṟāmarai tank, maintenance of flower gardens and for conducting charities.

Tirumala (A.D. 1570-1571)

"Talikōtta", it has been truly said, "was the climacteric but not the grand climacteric". The capital city Vijayanagar was no doubt sacked and reduced to ruins. The empire received the rude shock from the Muslim confederates. But the imperial authority continued to be a force in South Indian politics for another half a century. It still continued its resistance to the rise of the Muslim power and patronage of the Hindu religion.[176]

Tirumala attempted to re-establish the capital of Vijayanagar, but failed because, the Regent of Sadāśiva shifted his capital from Vijayanagar to Penugoṇḍa in 1567. After three years, king Sadāśiva was killed by Tirumala's son. Then Tirumala usurped the throne and assumed the title "Reviver of the Decadent Karnātaka Empire". He was the first ruler of the Āravīḍu line of kings. One of the important acts of Tirumala was the division of his kingdom into three viceroyalties as a step to counteract the expansionist activity of the Muslim powers on the northern provinces. He appointed each of his sons as viceroy of a province. Thus, Srīranga, the eldest son, was put in charge of the Telugu country with his capital at Udayagiri; his second son Rāma Rāja II in charge of the Kannaḍa country with his capital at Srīrangapaṭna (near Mysore); the youngest son Vēnkaṭapati in charge of the Tamil country with the capital at Chandragiri. Tirumala was a scholar and author. He patronised poets and was an ardent devotee of the Lord of Tirupati where his bronze statue is kept.

Srīraṇga I (A.D. 1572-1585)

Shortly after this reorganisation of his empire, Tirumala died and was succeeded by his first son Srīranga I in A.D. 1572. Five inscriptions of Srīranga are found at the Varadarājaswāmi temple, their dates ranging from Ś 1493 to Ś 1504. An inscription records gift of 5 villages by the temple authorities for conducting festivals in the month of Vaigāsi for the merit of Achyutappa Nāyaka, son of Adaippan Sinna Sēvappa Nāyaka who is evidently a Nāyak ruler of Tañjāvūr (380 of 1919, *S.I.T.I.* No. 369). From two inscriptions (383 and 479 of 1919), we learn that orders pertaining to the worship festivals in the temple etc, were given in the name of Venkatapatidēva-Mahārāja, who was presumably Venkaṭa II who was in charge of Chandragiri rājya in a subordinate viceroyalty during his elder brother Srīranga's reign from Penugoṇḍa. These inscriptions also inform us that during this time, Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya was managing the affairs of the temple. Srīranga's reign witnessed some more incursions of the Muslim powers into Vijayanagar kingdom. The territory north of Penugoṇḍa was occupied by the Sultan of Bijapur,

while the important portions of the province of Udayagiri like the districts of Guntur, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary and Nellore were conquered by the Sultan of Gōlkoṇḍa.[177] Srīranga's capital Penugonda was itself threatened. In the midst of such trying circumstances, Srīranga I died in A.D. 1585 and was succeeded by his younger brother Venkaṭa II.

Venkaṭa II (A.D. 1586-1614)

The reign of Venkaṭa, which lasted nearly three decades, was marked by a revival of strength and prosperity of the empire. His capital was at Chandragiri. He attacked the Muslim army of the Deccan successfully and recovered many of the territories like Udayagiri which had been lost to them by his predecessors. He also overcame many internal troubles within the empire.[178] From 1606 Vellore became his second capital.[179]

Inscriptions of Venkaṭa II ranging between Ś 1509 and Ś 1527 i.e., from A.D. 1587 to 1605, are found in Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple and they are not of any particular importance except that they mention the local agents or representatives giving grant to the temple. Ettūr Kumāra Tātāchāriar is mentioned as the manager of the temple and one Visva-Pundita was his agent.[180] Two other inscriptions mention one Periatirumalainambi Chakkarayar, agent of the Tātāchārya.[181] Tātāchārya was the preceptor of Venkaṭa II and was the manager of many temples at Kāñchi and elsewhere.

Venkaṭa II died in 1614 and a bitter civil war ensued soon after in which his rightful nominee, Srīranga was put to death by the rebel group. But the loyalists headed by Yachama crowned Srīranga's son Rāmadēva who ruled till A D. 1630. His inscriptions have been found in places like Chingleput, North Arcot Districts,[182] though none in our temple. Rāmadēva was succeeded by Venkaṭa III who ruled between A.D. 1630-1642. He is represented in our collection by a Telugu inscription dated Ś 1564 (A.D. 1642).[183] It mentions gift by one Tamappa or Tammi Bhūpati, son of Chinna Krishna. His inscriptions too have been found in other parts of Chingleput District.[184]

Venkaṭa III (1630-1642)

The political condition prevailing in the Vijayanagar empire round about A.D. 1630 at the accession of Venkaṭa III, can briefly be outlined here. The Vijayanagar empire became a shadow of its former self, crippled in territorial extent and power. The separation of the viceroyalty of Srīrangapaṭṭinam and the formation of kingdom of Mysore under Rāja Oḍayar had already abridged the size and the revenues of the empire. Immediately to the north of it, was the chieftainship of Ikkēri or Kēladi comprising the districts, extending from the Western Ghats right upto Harihar. The area east of it constituted a separate province with its headquarters at Penugoṇḍa Ikkēri and Penugoṇḍa regions were almost at the frontiers of the Bijapur territory. In the Tamil country, the Vijayanagar empire became parcelled out among its viceroyalties like the Nāyaks of Madurai, Thañjāvūr and Gingee owing only nominal allegiance to their Vijayanagar overlord, but often working against the latter.

Pedda Venkaṭa ruled between A.D. 1630 and 1642. Along with him was nominated his nephew Srīranga as the governor of Chandragiri. This further divided the

loyalties of the officers and the people. Venkaṭa probably had his residence at Vellore. The territories around Kāñchi, Poonamallee (Pundamalli), Chingleput, and modern city of Madras and upto Wandiwash, were directly under Venkaṭa III. In the conduct of administration the latter had to take the assistance of the two influential officers Dāmarla Venkaṭa and Dāmarla Ayyappa. These were the two sons of Chenna, the famous general of Venkaṭa II and they belonged to the Velugoti family of Kālahasti. During Venkaṭa III's time Venkaṭappa and Ayyappa were in charge of Wandiwash and Poonamallee respectively and as such wielded great influence with the king.[185] It was these two Dāmarla brothers who offered the present site of the Fort St. George, Madras, to the English East India Company in A.D. 1639 for their settlement. The English in their records gratefully refer to Dāmarla Venkatappa Nāyaka, the elder and the more influential of the brothers as the 'Lord General of the Carnātic' and 'Grant Vazier'.[186]

But Venkaṭa III seems to have been only the nominal Vijayanagar emperor. The region round Chandragiri fell to the share of his nephew Srīranga, whose territory bordered on that of the Gōlkonda and hence had to bear the brunt of the Gōlkoṇḍa attacks from the north-west. Srīranga did this important task and was largely responsible for guarding the fortress of the Vijayanagar empire. Gōlkoṇḍa launched the policy of expansion towards south and its army advanced right upto Venkatagiri and Armagon, as attested by the company correspondence at Pulicat. But they were beaten back by Srīranga's forces which cut short their southern movement. Srīranga had a clear policy in checking the Gōlkoṇḍa aggression. But, unfortunately, he did not have the hearty co-operation from the principal officers of the empire. The Dāmarla brothers were not favourably disposed towards him. The Nāyaks of Gingee, Thanjāvūr and Madurai did not rally round and were pulling in different directions.

Srīranga III

Venkata died in 1642 and Srīranga was raised to the imperial throne in spite of opposition from many chiefs including the Dāmarla brothers. The Gōlkoṇḍa army had advanced upto Pulicat and even laid siege to it. But Srīranga showed great courage, beat them back and checked their advance. The condition of South India in about 1642-43 is admirably summed up in a letter of Fort St. George dated Jan. 4, 1643: "This country being all in broils, the old king of Karnāṭaka dead. So is the Nāyak of Armagon, whose country is all in the hands of the Moors and who will ere long by all likelihood be masters of all this country."[187] The mention of Moors in this letter is obviously a reference to the Gōlkonda army which was advancing but which was temporarily driven back by Srīranga.

Gōlkoṇḍa and Bijapur armies invade

The siege of Pulicat conducted by Mallai was cut short by the invasion of the Muslim forces of the Gōlkoṇḍa and Bijapur who had now overrun a considerable part of Srīranga's dominion. The forces from Pulicat front had therefore to be withdrawn for opposing the Muslim invaders[188] But even Mallai's troops could not stem the tide of the Muslim invasion. By about 1645 the combined forces of Bijapur and

Gōlkoṇḍa laid siege to Vellore, the seat of Srīranga's residence. In this war, the latter was defeated decisively and his royal residence was occupied by the Muslim forces. Srīranga had to seek refuge in flight, leaving his defence operations to Mallai who only proved treacherous to his overlord. According to the Fort St. George letter despatch dated February 1645/1646 he surrendered "the strongest hold in the kingdom to Mir Jummla, upon composition to himself and all his people to go free."[189] Another letter dated 9th October of the same year informs us that the General of the Gōlkoṇḍa "hath almost conquered this kingdom and reigneth as king under the title Annabob" (i e., Nawab).[190] After this, Mir Jumla continued his march towards Gingee and captured it with the help of Bijapur to whom it was ultimately given in A.D. 1649. After this Srīranga made some feeble attempts to reinstate himself. But again he was betrayed by his own chiefs--this time Konēri Cheṭty, the commander who went over to side of Mir Jumla now backed up by the Mughal. Mir Jumla's forces were led by Tuppākki Krishnappa. Srīranga's forces were ambushed by the latter and defeated in October 1658. Thus, there was confusion in the political situation and places were changing hands quickly which made English Company's servants at Fort St. George even think of abandoning their settlement at Madras (letter dated November 1661). Between years 1661 and 1664, the Gōlkoṇḍa forces succeeded gradually in dislodging the officers of Mir Jumla and taking possession of all the territory under his control including those which were under Srīranga's control. This led to the definite establishment of the Gōlkoṇḍa authority in the region known as the Carnātic extending from the coast down to the borders of the highlands and from Gōlkoṇḍa down to Madras.[191] In 1645, Srīranga retired to Tirupati and that was the end of the Vijayanagar kingdom.[192]

Paucity of Inscriptions at the Varadarājaswāmi temple

The political confusion and uncertainty that prevailed in the region was probably the reason for the paucity of inscriptions of this time at the Varadarājaswāmi temple. Even in a few of these that occur, the usual mention of the reigning king is omitted. For example, in an epigraph dated Ś 1581 corresponding to A.D. 1659, the name of the ruling king or dynasty is omitted. But this epigraph is valuable in so far as it mentions the troublous times through which the temple passed. It records that one Vēnkatādri, son of Dharmayya of Kōṭṭapaḷḷi, was given certain honours and privileges in recognition of his services to the temple in running the administration during the difficult times of Muslim (*Turukkar*) invasion.[193] The reference is obviously to the incursious of the Gōlkoṇḍa forces. Even inscriptions of this temple dated A.D. 1677 or A.D. 1687 do not mention the ruling king,[194] or the dynasty evidently because the authorities who were in charge of recording the transactions preferred to be non-committal in the fast-changing political developments. But an outline of the political condition of this area, as known from other sources, can be given here.

Kāñchi under the Gōlkoṇḍa

By about A.D. 1672, the supremacy of the Gōlkoṇḍa power became established in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region or the Carnātic. Abdulla Kutub Shah, the Sultan of Gōlkoṇḍa, even issued farman to East India Co., at Madras confirming the privileges

given to them earlier.[195] At this time, Kāñchipuram formed part of the province of Pūndamalli, which was directly under an officer named Podelle Lingappa. Of the two Brahmin ministers of Gōlkoṇḍa, Mādanna and Akkanna, the former appointed his nephew Podelle Lingappa as a Collector of rents for the province of Pūndamallı. Kāñchipuram came under this province. His headquarters seem to have been at Kāñchipuram also for some time. He is said to have constructed a few streets and some minor temples at Kāñchi. One of the streets still goes by his name.[196] In 1674, Abdulla Kutub Shah was succeeded by his son-in-law Abdul Hasan Qutub Shah, the last Gōlkoṇḍa Nawab. In 1675, the Nawab lost all grip over the administration and left the direction of the affairs to his ministers and subordinate officers. The effect was felt at Madras in so far as Lingappa governor of Pūndamalli assumed greater powers and came into clash with the English at Madras.[197]

The Mahrāṭṭa army at Kāñchi, 1676

In 1676, the Mahrāṭṭa army under Sivāji moved into the Carnātic country. The English council at Madras reported that Sivāji, with the support of the king of Gōlkoṇḍa, was marching to sack and recapture Gingee, which was under the Bijapur. He sacked Gıngee and laid siege to Vellore and even went upto Thanjāvūr and left his brother Ekōji *alias* Venkāji as ruler of Thanjāvūr. In August 1678, Abdulla Khan, the commander of the Bijapur forces in the Vellore castle surrendered to Sivāji's forces after a siege. In October of the same year, he made himself the master of the advanced territory. In 1678, Sivājı's forces were at Kāñchipuram on their way to capture Pūndamalli, the headquarters of Lingappa and then lay siege to the English fort at Madras. This is clearly expressed in the Fort St. George Diary dated 21st August 1678, which says :

> "Yesterday there came intellıgence from Conjeevaram (which is the chief city of these parts, about 40 miles distance), that there was 1000 or 1500 of Sevajee's horsemen under the command cf Santojee, his brother, which appeared before the place. Wherefore the inhabitants were put into great fears, thinking the town would be taken and plundered. And they reported also that those horse, and with other forces, now intended to proceed further into the king of Golkonda's country and to take Punımallee castle, about 10 mıles in land from us. But this day came under other persons from Conjeevaram who reported that those horse of Sevajee about 1000 came thither in pursuit of some Vijapore fort that were intended to relieve and succour Veloor castle which hath been besieged by the Sevajee's forces these 14 months...The said castle of Veloor is now surrendered to Sevajee's forces..."[198]

The possible invasion of Sivāji's forces terrorised the English at Madras. But somehow Sıvāji suddenly changed plans and turned towards Mysore. All his further designs of conquest came to a sudden end by his premature death in 1680. He was succeeded by his son Sambāji.

Kāñchi under the Moghuls

Just as the old Hindu State of Vijayanagar succumbed to the Gōlkoṇḍa army forty years before, the effete dynasty of the Qutub Shahs now fell before the victorious Moghuls. Aurangazeb, the Moghul emperor, was determined to conquer and annex the two kingdoms of Gōlkoṇḍa and Bijapur. In the years 1686 and 1687, Aurangazeb invaded Bijapur and Gōlkoṇḍa and conquered them. The Moghul army

continued its march down to the Carnātic. In October 1687, news reached the Fort St. George that the Gōlkoṇḍa stronghold had yielded after protracted siege and the king was a prisoner. The next few days brought the news that the Moghul forces had come as far south as Kāñchipuram and that the Moghul flag was hoisted on the fort at Pūndamalli.

During this time, one 'Potty Cawn' (Fath-Khan) was appointed Subhedar of the Kāñchipuram area with his headquarters at Chingleput.[199] The Moghul army penetrated further south. But Sambāji, the son and successor of Sivāji, took up army against the Moghuls in the Deccan and prepared to resist their incursions into Gingee territory. He sent a force into the Carnātic under his general named Santōji Rau to fight the Moghuls. Early in 1688, an action was fought at Kāñchipuram between the Moghul forces and Santōji in which the latter was worsted. The Mahrāṭṭa army consisted of 2,000 horses and 5000 footmen and this war did considerable damage to the city of Kāñchi.[200] Late in 1689, Aurangazeb captured Sambāji, the Mahrāṭṭa king and tortured him to death. Sambāji's brother Rājā Rām Mahārāja was made the king of the Mahrāṭṭas at Gingee.[201]

Kāñchi under the Nawabs of the Carnātic, the viceroys of the Moghuls

Having thus conquered the two kingdoms of Gōlkoṇḍa and Bijapur and inflicted a heavy blow to the Mahrāṭṭa power, the Moghul power under Aurangazeb became supreme in the Deccan and South India upto Trichinopoly. Aurangazeb demanded allegiance from the other Indian States like Mysore and Madurai. Resistance came from the Nāyak of Gingee, but this was put down by Aurangazeb's able general Zulfikar Khān, after a long and arduous siege. With the fall of Gingee, the southern province of the Moghuls was established with Zulfikar as the chief. He was called the Nawab of the Carnātic. Sometime later, Zulfikar's services were wanted elsewhere and so, he had to leave for Delhi. He left behind him his lieutenant Daud Khān in charge. Daud Khān resided for some time in Gingee and then in Arcot, which later on became the capital of the Carnātic. His own civil officer, Sayyad Muzafar, became Nawab in his turn as Sādat-Ullah-Khān of Arcot in 1710. Orme considered him as the first regular and acknowledged Nabob of the Carnātic. But as pointed out by Crole, this is a mistake for he did not differ in this respect from his predecessor.[202] The only distinction is that with him a hereditary character was given to the office.

Image of Varadarāja removed from Kāñchi : A.D. 1688

What was the condition of the Kāñchi city and Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple therein ? The whole of the 17th century was indeed an unfortunate period in the history of the Carnātic. It was characterised by political uncertainty, instability and the consequent break in the administration of the land. Constant warfare, the extortions of the local Nāyaks and each victor trying to exploit the maximum he could within his short time, plunged the people in great misery and poverty. As Crole remarks "there was no one to take up their (people's) cause. They silently suffered and not a record remains among them of the horrors of that time."[203] This horror was never greater than on the eve of the Moghul invasion of the South in 1688, already mentioned. Kāñchipuram, in common with several other important centres of South India, felt

the shock of the iconoclastic zeal of Aurangazeb. His zeal for destroying the Hindu temples and idols seems to have been already widely known at Kāñchipuram. So, the authorities of the three prominent temples of the city (Varadarāja, Ekāmrēśvara and Kāmākshi temples), apprehending desecration at the hands of the invaders, disguised the images of the temple Gods and conveyed them secretly out of the town. The images of Lord Varadarāja and His consorts found an asylum in the jungles of Udayārpāḷayam in the Tiruchirapalli District. But in A.D. 1710, when the danger was past and Kāñchi considered safe, attempts were made to bring the deities back. But the local chieftain of Udayārpāḷayam refused to part with the images with which he was enraptured. At this time, an influential Srī-Vaishnava ascetic or Jīyar named Srīmat Paramahamsa Parivrājakāchārya Āṭṭān Jīyar caused his disciple Lāla Tōḍarmalla to intercede. The latter terrorised the chief with a strong contingent of troops and safely brought back the image and reinstalled it with great pomp and splendour. This is recorded in a long inscription found on a slab erected in the temple near the Tāyār shrine dated Ś 1632 corresponding to A.D. 1710.[204] This incident is even today commemorated in an annual festival called 'Udaiyārpāḷayam-festival'. This person, Āṭṭān Jīyar *alias* Srinivāsadāsa was a relative of Akkanna and Mādanna, the two influential Brahmin ministers of the Gōlkonḍa kingdom. He came down to Kāñchi probably in the wake of Aurangazeb's attack on Gōlkonḍa. In a copper-plate grant dated 5 years later than the above one i.e., Ś 1636 (A.D. 1714-15), the same Srinivāsadāsa is mentioned as a *guru* of Rāja Tōḍarmalla and that he granted five villages to the temple near Chidambaram. Rāja Tōḍarmalla was a General under Sa-adet-ulla-khān, the Nawab of Carnātic. He took a leading part in the capture of Gingee.[205]

The Āṭṭān Jīyar inscription mentioned above is dated in the reign of Sādat-Ullab-Khān who became the Nawab of Arcot in A.D. 1710. Under him and his successor Dost Ali for a period of almost 30 years, there was some peace and good administration in the Carnātic. Perhaps that is the reason why the restoration of the images was undertaken in A.D. 1710, the moment the political confusion ended. The rule of Sādat-Ullah-Khān over Kāñchipuram is again attested by another inscription at Srī Varadarāja dated Ś 1645 (A.D. 1723-24), which mentions him as Nabob Sadulla Khān Bahadur the governor of the Carnātic province under the Alamgir Pasha Mahmad, the Moghul Emperor at Delhi.[206] Sādat-Ullah-Khān ruled as Nawab until 1732 when he was succeeded by his nephew Dost Ali.

The inscription mentioned above which is dated 1723 is the last one in this temple in point of time. For the rest of the period, Kāñchi shared the political fate of the area known as the Carnātic which was sacked in turn by the Mahrāṭṭas in 1724 and 1740 and by the forces of Nizam of Hyderabad in 1742. Later, it featured in the Carnātic Wars and was even raided by the French and the English. The latter under Clive captured the considerable tract on the north of Pālār including Kāñchi on behalf of Muhammed Ali, the Nawab of the Carnātic. The Ekāmbarēśvara Temple, referred to as the 'Great Pagoda' in the English records, seems to have served alternatively as the citadel of the contending army in 1763. The English got from the Nawab the district of Chingleput (including Kāñchipuram) almost by compulsion for the expenses of the war with the French. It was known as the 'Jaghir'. This was the first tract of the country of the Carnātic where the Company's authority was

felt, though here too it was only indirect in the beginning. On the outbreak of the II Mysore war (1780) with Hyder Ali, it came under direct control of the East India Company. First it was placed under the committee of assigned revenues. In 1786, the committee was abolished. In 1788, the 'Jaghir' was divided into two divisions called northern and the southern and placed under two Collectors. In 1794, the *jaghir* came to be known as the Chingleput District, which included the present districts of Chingleput and Madras. Kāñchi continues to be in the District of Chingleput.

NOTES

1. Dr. S.K. Iyengar : Introduction to R. Gopalan's "*The Pallavas of Kāñchi* (1928), pp. XV and XVII.
2. K.A.N. Sastri, *Cholas*, pp. 129-132.
3. *S.I.I.* III, p. 269.
4. *Ibid*, p. 288, n. 5.
5. *S I I.* III, p. 423.
6. *Ibid*, p. 73.
7. 519 of 1919.
8. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 273.
9. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 323. The *praśasti* of the epigraph (*S.I.I.* IV, 445) records the war as a personal achievement of Kulōttunga I.
10. *S I I.* No. IV, 862.
11. M. Raghava Iyengar : *Ārāichi Toguthi* (Tamil, Madras, 1964), pp. 428-430.
12. 49 of 1893 (*S.I.I.*, IV, No. 862), 631, 632 and 635 of 1919.
13. 22 of 1890; 18 of 1893; 36 of 1888 etc.
14. 39 of 1921.
15. 632 of 1919.
16. *S.I.I.*, II, 55, K.A.N. Sastri, *op.cit*, p.180.
17. K.A.N. Sastri, *Naralōkuvīra* in his *Studies in Chōla History and Administration*, Madras, 1932, pp. 183-185 and also p. 188.
18. For full details of his various military exploits and the significance of the titles see *ibid.*
19. 33 of 1893; 436, 440, 471, 516, 518, 520 and 590 of 1919.
20. 406 of 1919.
21. See Chapter V for more details.
22. 465 and 389 of 1919.
23. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 366.
24. 48 of 1893; *S.I.I.* IV, No. 861. This is on the 3rd *prākāra* according to the scheme adopted in this thesis though it is mentioned as second in the Ep. Report.
25. *S.I.I.* III, No. 88.
26. See Appendix III.
27. 589 of 1919.
28. 493 and 487 of 1919.
29. 620 of 1919.
30. 456 of 1919.
31. 494 of 1919.
32. 554 of 1919.
33. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 421-422; *Ep. Ind.* VII, pp. 160 ff.
34. K.R. Venkataraman, *The Hoysalas in the Tamil Country*, pp. 17 and 27.
35. Appendix III.
36. *Ep. Car.* V, No. 211-b.
37. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 437 and 438.
38. 404, 408, 369 and 366 and 397 of 1919.
39. 404 of 1919.
40. 408 and 397 of 1919.
    Daṇḍanāyaka or Dannāyaka was the Hoysāḷa official of the higher grade with wide civil and military powers (cf. J. Duncan M. Derret, *The Hoysalas*, Madras, 1957), p. 188.
41. 369 and 366 of 1919.
42. 397 and 404 and 615 of 1919.
43. 612 of 1919.
44. 602 of 1919.
45. K A.N. Sastri has identified Manmu Siddha I with Nalla Siddha, *Chōlas*, p 388; *contra* Sewel, *HISI*, p. 130.
46. 456 of 1919.
47. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 390.
48. *Ep. Ind.* VII. p. 152 ff.
49. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 396.
50. Appendix III. See both under Rājarāja III and Tikka I.
51. 446 of 1919.
52. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
53. 34 of 1893 (Ś 1157).
54. 432, 434 of 1919; 463.
55. 446, 416, 395, 357 etc. of 1919.
56. *S.I.I.* IV, No. 851.
57. 621 and 620 of 1919.
58. 46 of 1893; *S.I.I.* IV, No. 859.
59. 416 of 1919.
60. 345 of 1919.
61. 570 of 1919.

62. 607 of 1919.
63. 609 of 1919.
64. 415 of 1919.
65. *Ep. Car.* VI, Kd. 100, K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 434 and note 81 and 82.
66. 2 of 1893 and 26 of 1890; *I.A.* XII 122 and 197 ff.
67. R. Sewel, *op. cit*, p 148.
68. 580 of 1907; *ARE* 1908 II, 75.
69. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
70. See Appendix III.
71. 353, 450 of 1919, 38 of 1890; 350 of 1919.
72. 538, 393, 571 and 343 of 1919. (all from Varadarājaswāmi temple, Kāñchi).
73. R. Sewel, *op. cit*, p. 152.
74. *Ibid*, pp. 154-155. The Pāṇḍya king claims to have killed a Telugu-Chōḍa chief "Gaṇḍagōpāla". There is considerable difficulty in identifying this chief, because this title was common to many of them. One thing is certain that he could not have been Tribhuvana-chakravarthi Gaṇḍagōpāla, for we find his inscriptions coming right upto 1291. It might have been Tikka I.
75. Appendix III.
76. 568 of 1919.
77. *ARE* 1920 of p. 118.
78. 39 of 1893; *S I.I.* IV, No. 852.
79. 538, 393, 503 of 1919; 36 of 1890
80. K.A.N. Sastri. *A History of South India*, p. 207.
81. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, pp. 171 and 396.
82. *Ibid*, p. 171; 603 of 1919.
83. *Ep. Ind.* VII, 128; R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 172. A theory of two Kōpperuñjingas, father and son, bearing the same name has also been put forward and also different versions are held about his relations with the Pāṇḍyas. Refer K.A.N. Sastri, *Chōlas*; R. Satyanatha Iyer, *The Kāḍavaraya Problem* in *Dr. S.K. Iyengar's Commemorative Volume*; V. Vridhegirisan, *The Kāḍavarayas* in *Journal of Indian History*, vol. XVI, 137-160; and views of S. Somasundara Desikar, *J I.H.*, vol. XVII, pt. 3.
84. K.A.N. Sastri, *op. cit.*, p. 430.
85. 353 of 1919.
86. 353, 450 of 1919; 38 of 1890; 365 and 356 of 1919 respectively.
87. *JMU*, X, p. 56.
88. 350.
89. 350 and 365 of 1919; cf. K.V. Raman: *The Nīlagangarayans in the Madras Region* in *The Early History of the Madras Region*, Appendix II.
90. 450 of 1919.
91. 444 and 445 of 1919; *Ep. Ind.* VII, pp 95 ff.
92. *Ibid.*
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid*, pp. 100-102.
95. K.A.N. Sastri : *A History of South India*, pp. 207-208.
96. 64 of 1927.
97. 52 of 1893; 485, 486 and 488 of 1919.
98. 488 of 1919.
99. 485 of 1919.
100. 483 of 1919.
101. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 150. K.A.N. Sastri, *Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*, p. 175.
102. Supra.
103. 592 of 1907; R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
104. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-175.
105. S.K. Iyengar : *South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders*, p. 74 ff.
106. K.A.N. Sastri : *A History of South India*, p 220.
107. 34 of 1890; *Ep. Ind.* IV, No. 145.
108. *Ep. Ind.* VIII, 8, *ARE* 1911, p. 79.
109. *Ep Ind.* VII, pp, 128/132; Hultzh, the editor of the epigraph, rightly surmises that Mānavīra was probably a member of the Gaṇḍagōpāla family which was connected with Kāñchi.
110. Dr. N.V. Ramanayya has pointed that since the *Vēlugōtivarivamsāvaḷi* mentions that Muppudu Nāyaka defeated the Pancha Pāṇḍyas and captured Kāñchi, the latter was probably under the Pāndyas who might have recaptured the city from the Chēra king Ravivarman Kulasēkhara. *Vēlugōtivarivamsāvaḷi* (1939, Madras, p. 7).
111. 401 of 1919; *SITI*, I, No. 397.
112. 572 and 585 of 1919.
113. Derret, *The Hoysalas, op. cit.*, p. 173.
114. 620 of 1919.
115. 566 of 1919.
116. 51 of 1893; *Ep. Ind.* III, p. 71.
117. 604 and 524 of 1919.
118. 523 of 1919.
119. 357 of 1929, 213 of 1912, 213 and 214 of 1901.
120. S.K. Iyengar's *Sources of Vijayanagar History*, p. 23 ff.
121. 573 and 585 of 1919.
122. *S.I.I.* I, 117, 120, 123.
123. 33 of 1890.
124. 152 of 1923; 210 of 1912 etc. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-198.

125. 31 and 32 of 1890.
126. 661 of 1919.
127. *SITI*, I, 350 (dated Ś 1300=A.D. 1378).
128. R. Sewel, pp. 208-211, Bukka II's inscriptions at Kāñchi dated 1406 found at Kāñchi (12 of 1893).
129. 367 of 1911, 215 of 1910, 226 and 272 of 1912.
130. 634 of 1919; M. Venkataramanayya, *Vēlugōtivamsāvali, op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.
131. K A.N. Sastri and M. Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of Vijayanagar History*, vol. I, p. 120.
132. 37 of 1890.
133. 658 and 613 of 1919.
134. *MER*, 1906-7, p 56.
135. Firishta, Scotts' Edition I, pp, 166-167.
136. S.K Iyengar, *Sources*, pp. 89-106; Sastri and Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of Vijayanagar History*, Vol. I, pp. 137-138.
137. *ARE* 1910, para 54.
138. See Chapter V for fuller details.
139. 667 and 648 of 1919.
140. 601 of 1919.
141. N. Venkataramanayya : *Studies in the History of the Third Dynasty of Vijayanagar*, p. 449.
142. 474 and 533 of 1919
143. 478, 513 and 569 of 1919.
144 418 of 1919.
145. 413 of 1919.
146. 414 of 1919
147. 474 of 1919.
148. *ARE* 1920, pp. 112-113, 641 of 1919.
149. See Appendix III.
150. 584 of 1919.
151. 546, 543 and 511 of 1919.
152. Dr. S.K. Iyengar, *Sources*, pp. 158-170.
153. *Ibid.*
154. 182 of 1929-30.
155. S.K. Iyengar, *Sources*, p. 12.
156. 498 of 1919.
157. Appendix III.
158. Fr. Heras : *The Araviḍu Dynasty*, pp. 31-32.
159. *ARE* 1920, p 114.
160. 528 of 1919.
161. *TDER*, I, pp. 272-273.
162. 482 of 1919.
163. 504 of 1919.
164. 580 of 1919.
165. *TDER*, I, p. 261.
166. 507 of 1919.
167. 527 of 1919.
167a. 592 and 591 of 1919.
168. *Ibid.*
169. 535 of 1919.
170. 534 of 1919.
171. *Ep. Ind.* Vol. III, p. 151.
172. *TDER*, pp. 269-271.
173. 484 of 1919.
174. *ARE* 1912, para 58.
175. *ARE*, 1920, p. 115.
176. R. Satyanatha Iyer *A Political and Cultural History of India*, Vol. II, pp. 294-295.
177. R Satyanatha Iyer, *op. cit*, p 298.
178. K.A.N Sastri and N. Venkataramanayya, *Further Sources of Vijayanagar History*, I, p. 321 ff.
179. R. Satyanatha Iyer, *op. cit.*, p. 299.
180. 421, 381 and 382 of 1919.
181. 499 of 1919.
182. R. Sewel, *op. cit.*, p 273.
183. 502 of 1919.
184. 201 of 1922.
185. S K. Iyengar, *Sources*, p. 21 and 304.
186. H D. Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, Vol. I.
187. Quoted by H D Love, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 53-54.
188. *Ibid.*
189. *Fort St. George to Surat O.C. No. 1974, 21st January 1645/6*, quoted by Love, *op. cit.*, Vol I, p. 73.
190. H D. Love, *op cit.*, p. 76.
191. *O C.* No. 2046, 9th October 1647, quoted by H.D. Love, *op cit*, p. 76 ff.
192. S K Iyengar, *History of Tirupati*, pp. 245-248.
193. 507 of 1919; *S.I.I.* I, No. 388, *Turuka avantarutile sthalam nirvagichu.*
194. 398 of 1919
195. Love, *Vestiges*, I, pp. 90-91.
196. Crole, *op. cit*, p. 118.
197. *Ibid*, p. 355.
198 *P.C.* Vol. II, 21st August 1678, quoted by Love, *Vestiges*, Vol. I, p. 357.
199 Love, *op. cit.*, pp. 513-14.
200 *P.C.* Vol. XIV dated 27th April 1688, Love, *op cit.*, p. 518.
201 R. Sewel, *op. cit*, p. 289.
202 Crole, *Manual*, p. 150.
203 *Ibid.*
204 Crole, *Manual*, p. 117, on the basis of wrong calculation assigned this epigraph to A.D. 1799 and held that the images were secretly removed for fear of Hyder Ali's invasion of Kāñchi in 1780. But actually, the epigraph is dated A.D. 1710 and as it refers to the reinstallation of the images, the removal of them should

have taken place much earlier. Moreover, the reference to Rāja Tōdarmalla is another clear proof for the earlier date (cf. *ARE* 1920, p. 20).

205. C.S. Srinivasachari : *A History of Gingee and its Nayak Rulers* (Annamalainagar, 1943), pp. 412-417.

206. 424 of 1919; *ARE* 1920, p. 123. A few more inscriptions of the Moghul ruler Alamgir Pasha are available in the neighbourhood of Kāñchi e g., 130 of 1922 found at Putteri. Also see *ARE* 1922, pp. 125-126.

CHAPTER III

THE LAY-OUT OF THE TEMPLE AND SEQUENCE OF CONSTRUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the general lay-out of the Varadarājaswāmi temple and the disposition of the various shrines, *maṇḍapas* and other structures therein. The ground-plans of the structures together with their measurements are given and the same are illustrated in general ground plan of the temple (Fig. 39). Like many of the big temple-complexes of South India, such as those at Srīrangam, Tiruvannāmalai, Madurai and Chidambaram, this temple was not built all at one time but was the result of many centuries of growth and development and therefore, it is essential to know the sequence of construction and the probable age of each of the enclosures and, wherever possible, of each structure therein. Inscriptions found on the walls *in situ* afford interesting and valuable evidence for determining the age of the structures. Many of them make explicit mention of the date of construction and the person responsible for the same; while many others, though not explicit, help us to fix the upper age-limit of a particular structure. For instance, the *gōpura*-entrance in the second *prākāra* opposite to the Narasimha shrine bears a number of Chōḷa epigraphs, the earliest going back to A.D. 1073. From this we can reasonably infer that the gateway was either coeval with it or earlier than the date of the epigraph, and certainly not later than that date. But, care should be taken to see whether the earliest inscription in a particular structure is in its original position and not built into or subjoined later. Caution is also necessary in another respect. In this case, we cannot blindly date the superstructure over the gateway with the help of the inscriptions found on the basement of the gateway, because we know many examples where the stone basal portion alone was built at one time and the brick superstructure built or rebuilt considerably later. In such cases, corroboration from the architectural features is absolutely necessary A more detailed architectural study of this temple is reserved for another chapter, but here it is briefly mentioned as corroborative evidence to fix the age of a structure wherever necessary.

Some useful information is also available from the traditional Vaishnavite literature, regarding certain shrines and *prākāras*, which is taken into consideration in outlining the sequence of construction. Description of the shrines and other structural features in the works of Manavāḷa Mahāmuni (1376-1445) and Appayya Dīkshitar (16th century), however brief, furnish important information.

Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple as it stands today is a vast and impressive complex of structures, enclosed by high and massive compound walls, all around, occupying a rectangular plot of land 377.40 metres long and 211.65 metres broad. Thus, it is easily one of the largest temple-complexes of South India. There are two main entrances to the temple—one on the west which is the principal entrance and another

on the east, which is virtually closed except for a small wicket-gate opening within the door-frame. An unusual, though not a prohibited feature, of this temple is that the main deity is facing west and hence the gateway that is in its front has become the principal entrance. Inside this walled enclosure is a series of concentric courtyards, around the central nucleus—the Hastigiri 'Hill'—on which is located the main sanctum of Lord Varadarāja. There are thus four courtyards in the temple and the local Srī-Vaishnavas would add the *mādavīdhis* or the main streets around the temple as the fifth one.[1] The narrow closed passage immediately around the sanctum which is known as *Tiruvuṇṇāḷigai* is excluded in the reckoning of the *prākāras.* The first enclosure which is on the 'hill' is named *Vayyamāḷigai*; the second is called the *Sēnayarkōntirumuṛṛam*; the third *Yamunaituṛaivar-tirumuṛṛam* and the fourth or the last is known as *Āḻvār-pradakshinam* (see Fig. 39, General Plan).

The first *prākāra* which is on the Hastigiri 'Hill' comprises of the *garbhagriha* with its forward complements like the *antarāla* and two axial walled *maṇḍapas* and a pillared *mahāmaṇḍapa* (G.P. Nos. 1 to 9).[2] The *garbhagriha* is a square cella (3×3 sq. metres) with the *mūlabhēra* of Lord Varadarāja standing majestically in the rear half. A narrow *antarāla* or vestibule connects the sanctum to the closed *maṇḍapa* (3.30×1.60 metres) in its front. There is a beautiful *dvitala vimāna* of the *śāla* (waggon vault) type over the sanctum.[3] It is called the *Punyakōṭi-vimāna,* which is taken to signify the bestowal of countless benefits on the devotee who sees and worships it. In front of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* and 1.53 metres lower than the floor-level of the sanctum, is the eight-pillared rectangular *mahāmaṇḍapa* (11.15 × 4.60 metres). It is a closed hall of granite masonry with its entrance leading us out into the first ambulatory which runs around the entire complex described above. This ambulatory is a closed pillared verandah which now affords the devotee the *pradakshinapatha* or passage around the sanctum. This is known as the *vayyamāligai.* This term is mentioned both in the *Guruparamparai* of Pinbaḷigia-Perumāḷ-Jīyar (13th century) and an inscription dated A.D. 1560.[4] The word *Vayyamāligai* means the mansion or house on this earth. According to the conception of the Srī-Vaishnavas, Lord Vishnu has His residence in the two worlds—*Nitya-vibhūti* and *Līla-vibhūti.* The former is His original abode in the terrestrial world and the latter is His abode on the earth where He manifests Himself in the *archa* or image form. This abode on earth is called in Tamil, *Vayyamāligai* The roof of this courtyard is supported by two rows of pillars which are all of the Vijayanagar type. It is quite likely that, at first, it was an open courtyard and in the Vijayanagar days, it was made into a closed hall, supported by a colonnade of pillars. The inner faces of the walls of this enclosure bear some good paintings of the late Vijayanagar times.

Unfortunately, there is no inscription or literary evidence to fix the date of the present structures of the *garbhagriha* and the two *ardhamaṇḍapas* in its front. But the architectural features clearly show that they belong to the Chōḷa times and probably to the 11th century A.D. This is fully discussed in the chapter on 'Architecture'.

Second Prākāra

On the south-east corner of the Hastigiri hill is a flight of 24 steps which we descend to reach the second *prākāra* round the foot of the 'Hill'. It is an open

courtyard which runs around the 'hill' or '*malai*' and hence known as *Malai-pradakshinam.* It is also known as the *Sēnaiyarkōn tirumuṟṟam,* as there is a shrine for Sēnaiyarkōn or Visvaksēna, the mythical Commander-in-Chief of the Lord, on the northern wing of the courtyard (G.P. No. 16). Passing along this courtyard, we see the high walls of the 'Hill' built of well-dressed blocks of stone. Its entire wall-space is studded with numerous Chōḷa and later inscriptions which are clearly readable from this courtyard.

This courtyard is enclosed by a double-storeyed cloistered verandah with colonnades of pillars of uniform size (2 metres tall) and design with circular cross-section and the typical Chōḷa corbel of the bevelled variety. This verandah may be later than its central entrance-gateway which is datable to the 11th century A.D. There are a number of inscriptions in the plinth portions of the gateway, the earliest belonging to the 3rd year of Kulōttunga I (i e., A.D. 1073).[5] This inscription does not allude to the construction of the gateway or the *prākāra* and therefore it may reasonably be presumed that the structure was slightly older than that date, perhaps contemporary with the Narasimha shrine, opposite to it.

Narasimha shrine

At the western foot of the 'hill' is the shrine of Nrisimha. It is a long but narrow shrine with a low ceiling (about 2 metres high) improvised by walling up the front portion of the inner core of the hill. It is conceived in the form of a cave in which Nrisimha is seated in the *yōgic* form at the far end. The inner faces of the walls of this shrine are profusely inscribed—the earliest going to A.D. 1053 which means that the shrine in its present form is at least as old as A.D. 1053, if not earlier.[6] The *garbhagriha,* the *antarāla* are all in one and the same level. The pillars of the *mukhamaṇḍapa* are short and thick with heavy tenon-like corbels, typical of the early and middle Chōḷa style. The access to this shrine is by a small doorway (2.25 × 1.18 ml) on the west.

In front of this shrine is a sixteen-pillared *mukhamaṇḍapa* of late Vijayanagar date. The Vijayanagar state-crest is carved on its pillars. This *maṇḍapa* is interposed between the Narasimha shrine and the entrance-gateway to this *prākāra.*

The cloistered verandah running along the periphery of the enclosure accommodates four shrines : one for Danvantri on the south-eastern corner, one for Gaṇēsa on the south-west and those of Āṇḍāḷ and Malayāḷa Nāchchiār on either side of the gateway (G.P. Nos. 12, 13, 14 & 15). Āṇḍāḷ, or Gōda, the divine maiden, who attained godhood by her intense devotion and whose Tamil hymns like *Tiruppāvai* are sung in every Vishnu temple, seems to have been enshrined sometime in the 14th century A.D. The existence of this shrine in the 15th and 16th century is attested by inscriptions.[7] Āṇḍāḷ is referred to by her other name Sūḍikkoḍutttanāchiār. From the disposition of the shrines, we can infer that the shrine of Malayāḷa Nāchchiār is probably as old as that of Āṇḍāḷ. The word Malayāḷa Nāchchiār literally means the 'consort from Malayāḷadēsa or Kērala country'. We do not know how and when this concept of Malayāḷa Nāchchiār and her consecration in a separate shrine on almost equal footing with Āṇḍāḷ, came into being. Perhaps, it was a result of the brief conquest of Kāñchi by the Chēra king Ravivarman Kulasēkhara in A.D. 1316, who performed his second coronation at Kāñchi on the bank of the Vēga-

vati and worshipped in the temple of Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ.[8] Probably, Malayāḷa Nāchchiār was installed here as a gift of the Chēra family to the Lord Varadarāja. The reference to Sērakulavalli-nāchiār in an epigraph of this temple lends plausibility to this surmise.[9] A parallel development is reported at Srīrangam. There, a legendary Chēra king Kulasēkhara is said to have given his daughter Sērakulavalli in marriage to Lord Ranganātha and done extensive constructional activities in the third *prākāra*. It is hence known as '*Kulasēkharan Tiruvīdi*'.[10]

There are twelve pillared and nine-pillared *maṇḍapas* attached to the shrines of Āṇḍāḷ and Malayāḷa Nāchchiār respectively. Both of them are considerably later than the shrines and belong to the later Vijayanagar times, about the 16th century A.D.

Third prākāra

An entrance (G.P. No. 17) with a *gōpura* leads us out into the third *prākāra* known as *maḍapalli-prākāra* as there is the *madappaḷḷi* or the temple kitchen at the south-eastern corner of the *prākāra*. It is also called *Yamunai Thuraivar tirumu-ṟṟam* i.e., the courtyard of Yamunaithuraivar, so called because Yamunaithuraivar or Āḷavaṇḍār, the great Srī-Vaishnava āchārya is believed to have met Srī Rāmānuja for the first time in this courtyard. This is considered to be a historic meeting, as it led to Āḷavaṇḍār's choice of Rāmānuja as his successor at Srīrangam. A number of shrines aud *maṇḍapas* are located in this courtyard. They are :—

Garuḍa shrine (G.P. No. 19)

In front of the *gōpura*, leading to the *Yamunaithuraivan prākāra* and facing the main deity, is a small shrine for Garuḍa who stands with *Anjali Hasta*, i e., hands clasped in worshipful mood.

Tiru-Anantāḷvār shrine (G.P. No. 21)

On the north-western side of this *prākāra* is the beautiful shrine for Anantāḷvār or Ādisēsha, the divine serpent on which Lord Vishnu reclines. The shrine faces east. It consists of a square *garbhagriha*, an *antarāḷa* and a *mukhamaṇḍapa*. There are a number of inscriptions on the walls. One of them, on the base of the south wall is dated A.D. 1212 (35th year of Kulōttunga III). It states that this shrine was built by Sīyaganga of the Ganga family, son of Chōlēndra Simha.[11] He was a Ganga feudatory of Kulōttunga III. He was known to be the patron of Pavanandi, the author of *Nannūl.*

Karumāṇikka Perumāḷ shrine (G P. No. 22)

On the northern side, and in the centre of this courtyard, is the small, but beautiful, shrine for Kariamāṇikka Varadar or Karumāṇikka Perumāḷ facing west. The present shrine was probably built by Vikrama-Chōḷa, sometime around his 11th year i e., A D. 1129. An inscription in the shrine of the year refers to the king setting up the image which was known as *Vikrama-Chōḷa-Viṇnagar-Āḷvār*. The presence of this shrine is mentioned in the *Guruparamparai* of Pinbaḷagia Perumāḷ Jīyar who lived during the beginning of the 13th century A.D.[12] It has a square *garbhagriha*, an *antarāḷa* and a *mukhamaṇḍapa*. There is no *vimāna* or tower over the sanctum,

The thousand-pillared maṇḍapa (G.P. No. 23)

Beyond this and on the north-eastern corner of the *prākāra* is the pavilion called the *Āyirakkāl-maṇḍapam* or the hall of a thousand columns, built in two storeys. Though there are no thousand-pillars in the hall, it has become a convention to call it so. It seems to have been built under the patronage of Pratāpa Rudra Dēva, the Kākatīya king who had a brief spell of power over Kāñchi in A.D. 1316.[13]

On the south-eastern corner of this *prākāra* is the *maḍappaḷḷi* or the kitchen (G.P. No. 24). It is an old structure having a number of Chōḷa characteristics. An interesting inscription states that the kitchen was built by Naralōka-Vīra, the famous general and minister of Kulōttunga I. The structure is, therefore, datable to the latter half of the 11th century A.D.

Abhishēka-maṇḍapa (G.P. No. 20)

In a central position of the forecourt of this *prākāra* is a fine edifice called the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* where the *tirumañjanam* of the *utsava bēras* (processional deities) of Lord Varadarāja and His consorts takes place. It is a pillared hall (10 metres long, 5 metres broad) closed on three sides with a stepped approach. The structure appears to have been built in the early half of the 13th century A.D. From outside, it looks more like a shrine than a *maṇḍapa*, especially because of the presence of the pilasters on its exterior walls. An undated inscription records the construction of this *maṇḍapa* by one Elambilakkāṭṭu-Nāyakar.[14] Since it is an epigraph subjoined to the one dated in 21st year of Rājēndra III i.e., A.D. 1236, it can be taken to be of the same year. On palaeographical grounds too, the inscription may belong to the same time.[15] The architectural features of the *maṇḍapa* also point to the same date.[16] The same inscription informs us that this structure was also known as *Dēvamāradēvan.* The front porch with the balustraded stepped entrance of the *maṇḍapa* was probably constructed in the 16th century by one Aḷagia-manavāḷa-Jīyar, a prominent religious leader of Kāñchi, who held an important position in the temple. The *Kannāḍı Arai* or the Mirror-Hall in which the *utsava* deity stays during festival days and the present safe-vault of the temple are located inside this *maṇḍapa.*

An interesting epigraph belonging to the time of Ballāḷa III dated Ś 1282 (A.D. 1359) mentions that the Hoysāḷa king seated with his consorts on the throne named *Viravallālan* in the *abhishēka maṇḍapa* listened to the Tamil hymns of Saṭagōpa[17] (Nammāḻvār's *Tiruvōymoḷi*).

In front of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* is a large thirtytwo-pillared *maṇḍapa* with fine carvings (G.P. No. 27). When the holy bath to the deity is performed in the *abhishēka-manḍapa*, the Srī-Vaishnava devotees assemble here and recite the portions of the *Purusha Śūkta* and the Tamil devotional hymns (*Prabhandams*) of the Āḻvārs. This is also a structure in Vijayanagar style bearing their royal boar crest on its ceilings.

On the northern side of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* is the elevated *maṇḍapam* called the *kiḷi-maṇḍapa* or the *Pavitrōtsava maṇḍapa* where *povitrōtsava* festival is conducted (G.P. No. 34). The *vāhanas* or the God's processional vehicles are kept in this now. The shrine for Rāma is on the extreme north of this *maṇḍapa* (G.P. No. 35). It is a structure of the Vijayanagar times. The plinth of the *maṇḍapa* overlaps with the plinth of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* and covers the moulded plinth portions of the latter.

Some of the inscriptions of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* are thus covered by end-portions of this *maṇḍapa.* This clearly proves that the latter was built long after the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa.*

Shrine of Perundēvi Tāyār (G.P. No. 28)

On the western side of this *prākāra* is the shrine of Perundēvi Tāyār, the chief consort of Lord Varadarāja. It is customary to offer worship to this shrine before going to the shrine of Varadarāja. While the latter faces west, the former faces east. The Tāyār shrine is built on an elevated pediment about 3 metres (about 10 feet) high reached by a flight of 10 steps. This elevation was given probably to match it with that of the sanctum of Her consort, stationed at the height of nearly 14.60 metres (45 feet) from the ground level. There is an open circumambulation around the sanctum and then a cloistered verandah around, a *mukha-maṇḍapa* close to the sanctum and a spacious pillared hall, *mahā-maṇḍapa* in front—all occupying a total area of 11.80 sq. metres (G.P. Nos. 29, 30 and 31).

In general, separate shrines for Dēvi came to be built in Tamilnād only in the later Chōḷa times.[18] In this temple also, the shrine for Tāyār seems to have been built sometime in the first half of the 13th century A.D. It is conspicuous by its absence in the early epigraphs. The earliest reference to the shrine is found in a record dated A.D. 1236, belonging to Rājarāja III.[19] It registers a gift of 33 heads of cattle for a lamp in the shrine of Periapirāṭṭiar, the prime consort of Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ. An inscription of the 17th year of the Telugu-Chōḍa chief Vijaya Gaṇḍagōpāla dated circa A.D. 1265 also records gift to the same shrine. The *Guruparamparai prabhāvam* written by Pinbaḷagia-perumāḷ Jīyar in the 13th century clearly mentions the presence of the shrine.

The *mukhamaṇḍapa* right in its front (G.P. No. 30) was also constructed sometime around A.D. 1259 by one Vanga-Kālingarayan of Kappalūr whose portrait-sculpture in bas-relief is found in the wall of the *maṇḍapa* with an inscription[20] which reads *'Kappalūr-udayan-vanga-kālingarayan-Tirumaṇḍapam'.* The inscription does not bear a date, but we know from other sources that he was a feudatory of the Pāṇḍyan king Vīra-Pāṇḍya who came to the throne in A.D. 1253.[21] The construction of this *maṇḍapa* might have taken place a few years later than that date. The architectural features of the structure support the date.

But the original Tāyār shrine of the later Chōḷa times was subsequently replaced by the existing one, sometime in the latter half of the 15th century A.D., evidently under the royal patronage of the Vijayanagar rulers. It is interesting to note in this connection that an inscription dated A.D. 1487 refers to the reconsecration of the image of Perundēvi Tāyār.[22] Probably, this was done soon after the construction of the present shrine. It is an elegant structure which displays the exuberance of the Vijayanagar style of architecture. The *vimāna* over the sanctum is known as the *Kalyānakōṭi vimāna* and was built by Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya in A.D. 1614 (Ś 1536)[23] He is said to have covered the *vimāna* with gold-coated plate. Now, the copper sheet alone remains there,with a few tinges of gold here and there.

The *mahāmaṇḍapa* to the east (G.P. No. 31) of the Tāyār shrine is also a fine product of Vijayanagar times. Here is celebrated the famous Mahānavami festival on which day Varadarāja and Perundēvi are seated in the same pedestal—the only

day in the whole year when this occurs. This ornamental *maṇḍapa* was built by Aḻagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar, the Kōil-kēḻvi (Superintendent) of this temple by about the middle of the 16th century. His portrait-figure is sculptured in one of the pillars of this *maṇḍapa*. This *maṇḍapa* with its typical ornamental double-pillars with the rearing horsemen has close stylistic resemblance to the hundred-pillared *maṇḍapa*, in the outer courtyard of the temple, which was also built by the same Jīyar.

Ūñjal maṇḍapa (G.P. No. 26)

A small but noteworthy pavilion in this *prākāra* is the *Ūñjal maṇḍapa* located in the open courtyard (called *Aḻagiya Maṇavāḷa tirumuṟṟam*) adjacent to the Tāyār shrine (G.P. No. 25). It is a four-pillared pavilion, standing on a high terrace. The pillars and the coffered ceiling are minutely carved and display elegance and beauty. This is a construction of Vijayanagar times. Their royal crest is boldly carved in more than one place on the ceiling of this pavilion. Here, we have a good example of intricate chiselling that was adopted by the Vijayanagar artisans, so that the whole *maṇḍapa* resembles a fine feligree work. This *maṇḍapa* is specifically mentioned in an epigraph of Achyutarāya dated in A.D. 1530.[24]

From this courtyard we go to the next, the fourth and the outermost *prākāra* passing through a gateway crowned by a *gōpura* (G.P. No. 36). This gateway is now known as *Toṇḍaradippoḍi vāsal.* The correct name seems to have been *Tōḍarmāl-vāsal* as the statue of Rāja Tōḍarmal is kept near this entrance. He did great service to this temple by restoring the *utsava* image of Varadarāja from a forest to which it had been previously removed for fear of desecration at the hands of the Muslim invaders[25] and is kept near this entrance. This gateway and its adjoining compound wall can be dated back to the 11th century A.D., as inscriptions of Kulōttunga I dated 36th (A.D. 1106) are found on its walls.[26] One of them refers to a grant by the wife of Karunākara Toṇḍaimān, the famous general of Kulōttunga I. However, this enclosure wall, according to the local tradition, was heightened and rebuilt by Aḻagiya-maṇavāḷa Jīyar in the 16th century. The Jīyar's portrait-sculptures are placed on the top of the compound wall at two places.[27]

Fourth Prākāra

We now come to the 4th and the largest courtyard of this temple. This is called the *Āḻvār-pradakshiṇam* or *Āḻvār-Tiruvīdi,* as the shrines of all the Āḻvārs are situated in this enclosure. This is a very long and broad courtyard consisting of a number of shrines, *maṇḍapas*, the *dvajasthamba*, the *balipīṭa*, tanks and gardens—all giving a magnificent appearance. The shrines of the Āḻvārs and āchāryas as also some of the shrines like those of Krishna, Varāha, Ranganātha are built along the periphery of the enclosure—all of them gravitating towards the main sanctum of the temple at the centre.

In describing the structures of this vast courtyard we can conveniently divide the enclosure into four quadrants with reference to two axial lines east-west and north-south, cutting across the sanctum, the quadrants—the north-east, south-east, south-west and north-west. *North-east* : In this sector is the shrine of Nammāḻvār which faces west (G P. No. 43). It consists of a square sanctum (4.30 sq. metres), an *antarāla* and a *mahāmaṇḍapa*. There is a beautiful bronze image of Nammāḻvār for

whom regular festivals are conducted. From the reference to the popularity of Nammāḻvār's *Tiruvōymoḻi* mentioned in the inscription of Ballāḷa III, we will not be wrong if we infer that Nammāḻvār was already deified here. *South-east* : In the south-east quadrant are shrines for Tirumangai Āḻvār and Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni, the former facing west and the latter facing north (G.P. Nos. 45 & 46). The Tirumangai Āḻvār shrine has been completely rebuilt in recent years. The shrine of Manavāḷa Mahāmuni is a spacious building. It appears to have been built in the Vijayanagar times, as is indicated by the typical Vijayanagar pillars and pilasters of the shrine having *pushpa-pōdigai* corbels and a number of typical bas-relief sculptures on the pillars.

An inscription dated A.D. 1555 records an endowment for offerings to Peria Jīyar (Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni) on his birth asterism of Mūlam.[28] From this it may be inferred that he was already enshrined, probably, in the present shrine. The architectural features tally well with that period.

Near the shrine of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni towards the west are the shrines of Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār and Rāmānuja (G.P. Nos. 47 and 48). From many Chōḷa inscriptions, we know that offerings were made to many Āḻvārs like Poigai and Bhūdam, and in all likelihood they along with Tirumalisai were also deified during the same time. The present shrine however seems to have been constructed during the 15th century under the Vijayanagar patronage. An epigraph of king Virupāksha dated Śāka 1389 (A.D. 1467) is found on the *maṇḍapa* in front of the shrine.[29] It records the purchase of land for the shrine of Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār. From this, we can infer that the shrine was in existence even before this date. Next to the shrine of Rāmānuja is that of Mudal-āḻvārs which is closed now (G.P. No. 49).

South-west : Vāhana maṇḍapa—This is a beautiful pavilion in late Vijayanagar style having pillars with rearing horses (G.P. No. 50). It is closely modelled on the design of the *Kalyāṇa maṇḍapa*, situated opposite to it. In the rear portion of this pavilion are accommodated the shrines of Vēdānta Dēsika, and Lakshmikumāra Tātāchārya (G.P. No. 51). The latter was the manager of this temple during the times of Vijayanagar king Vēnkaṭa I. During the Vaisākha festivals, the *utsava* deities mounted on the *vāhanas* would be placed in this pavilion on the return from processions and the concluding portions of the *Vēda* and the *Prabhandam* would be recited here.

Tulābhāra-maṇḍapas (G.P. Nos. 52 & 53)

There are two small four-pillared *maṇḍapas*, about 12 feet high, on the west of the *dvajasthamba*. These are known as *Tulābhāra maṇḍapas*, probably because they were built on the occasion of the Tulābhāra ceremony performed by the Vijayanagar king Achyutarāya in A.D. 1532. He is said to have weighed himself against pearls (*mukta-tulābhāra*) and given the entire wealth as gift to this temple. These two *maṇḍapas*, almost identical in construction and style, might have been built for this occasion. There is a specific reference to the *Tulābhāra maṇḍapa* in his inscription dated A.D. 1533.[30]

The Stable maṇḍapa (G.P. No. 56)

This *maṇḍapa* which faces north is a spacious one with high pials on either side.

It consists of long cloistered verandahs with a square open courtyard in the centre. It has no architectural or sculptural embellishment. The Vijayanagar royal-crest is carved in bold relief at many places on the *kodungai* or the flexed cornice over the *maṇḍapa*. But now the building is in a state of neglect and disuse. This seems to have been used once for shelter for the cows, horses etc., belonging to the temple. Adjacent to it is the *Vasanta-maṇḍapa* where the temple-office is now situated (G.P. No. 57). *North-east* : In this sector are situated important shrines, *maṇḍapas*, tanks and gardens.

Anantasaras—the sacred tank (Fig. 2)

This enchanting tank occupies a central position in this sector. About 78.6 metre long, 60 metre broad, it has well-paved stone steps all around for the devotees to have easy access and have a holy dip before entering into the temple. It is quite an old tank, mentioned in the *Guruparamparai* (13th century) and Vēdānta Dēsika's *Satyavrata Mahātmiya*. In addition to the usual *Neerāḷi-maṇḍapa* (16 pillared) in the centre of the tank, there is another smaller four-pillared *maṇḍapa*, surmounted by a small *vimāna* or tower (G.P. Nos. 67 & 68). It is here that the original but mutilated *mūlabhēra* of Lord Varadarāja called Ādi Atti-Varada is made to rest. The stone-steps of the tank were repaired and reset under the orders of the Vijayanagar minister Rāmarāya in the latter half of the 16th century A.D.

On the western bank of this tank are the small shrines of Krishna and Varāha, both facing east and their rear portion going very near but not abutting on the outer compound wall of the temple.

Krishna shrine (G.P. No. 63)

It has a square sanctum, an *antarāla* and a *mukha-maṇḍapa*. The sanctum is crowned by a *vimāna*, about 25 ft. in height. The architectural style is suggestive of the later Pāṇḍya period. On its sanctum wall, a fragmentary Tamil epigraph of the late 13th century characters belonging to one Māravarman Sundara Pāṇḍya is found. The wall niches, five in number, are squattish and the pillar corbels show the incipient *pūmunai* bracket. This shrine is now without the deity, the *utsava* idol is preserved elsewhere in the temple. The shrine is now used as a store-room for the trappings of the temple elephant.

Varāha and other ruined shrines (G.P. No. 64)

Further north on the same row are the dilapidated shrines of Lord Varāha and an empty shrine—both have square *maṇḍapas* with the sanctums in their centre. They are empty, the deities having been removed to the interior of the temple. The extant structures are devoid of any notable architectural features. They are in the normal Vijayanagar pattern and are datable to 16th century A.D. Further north also there is a ruined unused *maṇḍapa* of Vijayanagar times (G.P. No. 68).

Srī Ranganātha shrine (G.P. No. 66)

On the northern bank of the tank Anantasaras stands a solitary shrine dedicated to Ranganātha. It is of modest size, and built in the same pattern as the Varāha shrine i.e , a small sanctum and frontal porch within a covered *maṇḍapa*. The large

mūlabhēra of Ranganātha in the reclining posture is a beautiful image. According to the Sanskrit inscription of Naralōkavīra (11th century) already referred to, a shrine for Hari (Vishnu) in reclining posture was built by him, and crowned by a *vimāna* with a golden *kalaśa*. But it is difficult to say if this is the shrine under reference. The shrine is now without a *vimāna*. The shrine itself seems to have been rebuilt in the Vijayanagar times.

The Chakrattāḷvārshrine (G.P. No. 40)

On the eastern bank of the Anantasaras tank is the shrine of Chakrattāḷvār or Sudarsana, personification of Lord Vishnu's discus. The shrine seems to have been constructed by one Ilaiāḷvān Kālingarāyan of Neṭṭūr in the 14th year of Kulōttunga III i.e., A.D. 1191. The inscription recording this fact calls the deity by its Tamil name—*Tiru-āḷi-Āḷ vār-āḷi* meaning the discus.[32]

The sanctum is unusually spacious here. In the centre of the sanctum is placed a large, two-faced and exquisite image of Chakrattāḷvār.

Probably because the image is two-faced, the sanctum also has two doorways, so that both the faces would be visible to the worshipper when he circumambulates the shrine. Similarly, the outer *maṇḍapa* built around the sanctum has two entrances—one on the east and the other on the west.

Both the *maṇḍapas* are built in the Vijayanagar style, as evidenced by the tall and ornate pillars and the *Pushpa-pōdigai* corbel. The Vijayanagar state-emblem, the boar and daggar motif, is carved prominently on the ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* on the west.

Poṟṟāmarai tank

There is a big tank behind the Nammāḷvār shrine and on the north-east of the outer courtyard and near the eastern entrance of the temple. An inscription dated A.D. 1544 records a grant of money for the repairs to this tank by one Chennayyangar.[33] The tank is stated to have been first dug by the donor's great grandfather. From this we can infer that the tank came into existence sometime around A.D. 1500.

Dorai Thōṭṭam (Garden)

Immediately on the east of the Chakrattāḷvār shrine is a vast flower garden of the temple, which occupies almost the entire length of the *prākāra* upto the eastern *Tirumadil*. A variety of flower-plants like the jasmine (*malli*), the rose, *nanjāvaṭṭai* (white flowers), besides trees of mango, coconut, jack-fruit are also grown for the use in the temple.

Perundēvi Tāyār's '*Friday maṇḍapa*' is situated here (G.P. No. 42-a). The *utsava* idol of Tāyār used to be brought in procession to this pavilion and made to rest here every Friday. The annual *Davanōtsavam* (garden-festival) for Lord Varadarāja is celebrated here in the month of Chaitra (April). An epigraph of Sadāśiva dated Śāka 1473 mentions the festival in the *Vasantha Tōppu*, in the month of Chittirai. Probably, the reference is to this garden.

In the same garden are situated the two shrines, one for Periāḷvār and another for Toṇḍaraḍipoḍi Āḷvār and Tiruppāṇ Āḷvār (G.P. Nos. 41 and 42). These shrines

seem to have been built in the early Vijayanagar period. The presence of the shrine for both the Āḻvārs is mentioned by an inscription of Sadāśiva dated A.D. 1558 and 1560 (447 and 448 of 1919). But owing to sheer negligence, these shrines are overgrown with vegetation covering the entire structure. Hence, the deities have been removed and placed in various other shrines.

The Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa (G.P. No. 61)

Perhaps the most attractive structure in this *prākāra* is the hundred-pillared *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* on the south bank of the Anantasaras tank. In accordance with the convention, it is placed slightly to the side of the principal entrance to the temple. It is a magnificent pillared pavilion with a raised platform for a throne in its centre for the reception of the *utsava* deities of the Lord and His consorts on ceremonial occasions. There is a beautiful and small pavilion made of black polished granite and placed at the rear bay on a high pedestal. It is here that the *utsava* deities are placed. On certain festival days, religious discourses are given to the people assembled.

The *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* is an important contribution of the Vijayanagar times. The pillars are tall and monolithic and their shafts are sculptured into rich and varying patterns like rearing horsemen etc. It is by far the most attractive edifice, richly adorned with innumerable sculptures of the Vaishnava pantheon, puranic stories, portrait-figures, besides remarkable architectural motifs and designs. This is discussed in detail in chapter on 'Architecture'. It appears to have been built by Aḻagia-Maṇavāḷa-Jīyar in the latter half of the 16th century A.D. evidently under the royal patronage. The Jīyar's portrait-figures are sculptured on two pillars of this *maṇḍapa.*

Having described the buildings in the four quarters of this outer courtyard, we now turn to those on the east-west axial line. There are the *Dvajastambha* and the *balipīṭha* (G.P. 38 and 39), the two tall four-pillared *maṇḍapas*—all in the forecourt and the two imposing gateways or entrances, one each on the east and west. One remarkable fact that was revealed by our survey plan of this temple is that the central axis-line, drawn from the centre of the outer gateways on the east to that of the west, runs along the exact centre of the gateways of all the inner *prākāras* and the *garbhagriha*. This clearly shows that in expanding the temple premises or courtyards, the central-axial line of the innermost sanctum served as the base line to which all the additional gateways were aligned.

Four-pillared maṇḍapas (G.P. Nos. 59 and 60)

Situated further east along the central axis are the two tall four-pillared *maṇḍapas*, crowned by small *vimānas*. They have the style and grace of the Vijayanagar workmanship. Carved stone rings are seen hanging from tips of the cornices. Sculptural representations of some Vijayanagar kings and a few other benefactors of the temple are carved on their pillars. The one nearer to the *dvajastambha* is known as *Tirukkachinambi maṇḍapa* as the figure of this *āchārya* was carved on all its pillars.

Outer courtyard

The entire outer courtyard is enclosed by a high boundary wall (*tirumadil*) on all sides with only two openings which form the gateways to the temple—the eastern gate (*kiḻakku-gōpura vāsal*) and the western gateway (*mērku-gōpura vāsal*) (G.P. Nos. 44 and 58). The principal gateway in this temple is the one on the west instead of the usual east because the principal deity is facing in that direction. So, necessarily, all the important structures like those of Garuḍa, the *dvajastambha*, the *balipīṭha* and the main entrance are on the west. That is the reason why the western gateway is kept open for the public, whereas the eastern gateway is always kept closed except for a small opening (about 2 metre square) in the closed door. The signs of disuse and neglect are evident on the eastern portion of the courtyard. The floor is not paved. The tank is in disrepair and wild vegetation have grown everywhere. In sharp contrast to this, the western portion of the courtyard is kept spick and span.

Gōpuras : The western *gōpura*, though smaller in size (160 ft. or 53 metres) than the one on the east (180 ft. or 60 metres), is better proportioned and more beautiful. Both stand on a lofty plinth built of solid stone-masonry which form a stable foundation for the superstructure, built of brick and mortar. The superstructures which are pyramidal in shape rise in several storeys which are composed of a series of diminishing tiers. The western *gōpura* has seven storeys, while the eastern one has nine. But, while the horizontal and vertical arrangements seem to be well-balanced in the western *gōpura*, it is not so in the eastern one, where there is a pronounced emphasis on the verticality.

Fortunately, there are a number of inscriptions on the plinth portions of the western *gōpura*, giving us clues to its probable date. The earliest of them is dated Ś 1296 (A.D. 1374) and belongs to Kampana Uḍaiyar, while another belongs to successor Harihara and dated Ś 1325 (A.D. 1403). This *gōpura* thus belongs to the early Vijayanagar period in point of time though in style it is still rooted in the late Chōḷa or Pāṇḍya pattern. But the eastern *gōpura* is much more evolved and resembles closely the tall *gōpura* of Ekāmbarēśvarar temple at Kāñchi which was built by Krishnadēva Rāya in the first half of the 16th century A.D.

Before concluding this chapter, we may refer to one important verse of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni in his *Kāñchi Divya Dēsa Sangraha Slōkamālika* in which he has described the important shrines existing in this temple during his days [34] He lived between A.D. 1370 and 1445 and in this verse we get a fairly good picture of this temple for that period. The items of structure he has mentioned and the present-day equivalents are :

	Present equivalents		*Names used in the ve*
(1)	Gateway	...	Srīmat Dvāram
(2)	Balipīṭha	...	Mahābalipīṭa
(3)	Anantasaras tank	...	Panindrahradam
(4)	Vēṇugōpāla	...	Gōpinam Ramaṇam
(5)	Pattarpirān or Periāḻvār	...	Baṭṭanātha
(6)	Gnānapirān	...	Varāhavapusham
(7)	Nammāḻvār	...	Saṭavāriṇam
(8)	Kaliyan (Tirumangai Āḻvār)	...	Kaliripum

(9)	Baktisārar or Tirumaḷisai Āḷvār	...	Baktisāra
(10)	Rāmānuja	...	Lakshmaṇayōgi
(11)	Mudal Āḻvārs	...	Munivaran Adyan
(12)	Dvārapālakas	....	Dvārapan
(13)	Abhishēka maṇḍapa	....	Mañjanamaṇḍapa
(14)	Perundēvi Tāyār	...	Sarasijām
(15)	Anandāḻvān	...	Hētisa
(16)	Chakrattāḻvān	...	Bhōgīśwaram
(17)	Rāma	...	Rāma
(18)	Kariamāṇikkapperumāḷ	....	Nīlamaṇi
(19)	Tirumadapaḷḷi	...	Mahānasa
(20)	Nrisimha	...	Nrisimham
(21)	Garuḍa	...	Thārkshyam
(22)	Āṇḍāḷ	...	Srīyam
(23)	Sēnainātar	...	Sēnānyam
(24)	Karigiri	...	Karibhūtara
(25)	Punyakōṭi-vimāna and the Lord therein	...	Punyakōṭyām Hari

From the order of shrines he has mentioned, we can easily infer that he has described the temple right from the principal gateway i.e., the gateway on the west to the sanctum sanctorum. In all likelihood, there was only one gateway to this temple during his time because the present gateway on the east and the *gōpura* over it can be ascribed only to the first half of the 16th century. After mentioning the Mahābalipīṭha, he describes the shrines in the outermost court i.e., the fourth *prākāra* in the order in which one would see during circumambulation. After mentioning the Anantasaras-tank, he mentions the shrines of Vēṇugōpāla, Varāha, Periāḻvār, Nammāḻvār, Tirumangai Āḻvār, Tirumaḷisai, Rāmānuja, and Mudal āḻvārs—all these are now within the fourth *prākāra*. Then at the entrance to the inner *prākāra* (III prākāra), he mentions the *dvārapālakas*, which are still there. The shrines mentioned by him in this *prākāra* are: Perundēvi Tāyār, Anandāḻvān, Chakrattāḻvān, Rāma, Kariamāṇikkapperumāḷ and Garuḍa, besides the abhishēka-*maṇḍapa* and the *madapaḷḷi* (kitchen). The reference to the Chakrattāḻvān in this connection is interesting. Probably, originally this shrine was in the third *prākāra* and later on in the Vijayanagar times, it was built in its present position i.e., in the fourth *prākāra*. Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni then describes the next inner *prākāra* (II prākāra) beginning with Nrisimha. Therein, as he circumambulates, he mentions the shrines of Āṇḍāḷ, Sēnainātar, Karigiri or the Hastigiri hill, the Punyakōṭi-vimāna and the Lord therein—which all tally precisely with the disposition of the structures as they stand today.

Some of the omissions in this description are also significant. For example, the absence of reference to the Kalyāṇa *maṇḍapa* or *Vāhana-maṇḍapa* in the outermost *prākāra* is quite natural for, as shown earlier, they are the products of the later Vijayanagar period.

Similarly, while he has mentioned the *Punyakōṭi-vimāna*, he does not refer to the *Kalyāṇa kōṭi vimāna* over the shrine of Perundēvi Tāyār. It is in keeping with our

evidence that the *Kalyāṇa kōṭi vimāna* was erected only in the beginning of the 17th century by Tātāchārya.

One important fact that we know from Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's description is that the general outer plan of this temple in its present form with all its four *prākāras* had already taken shape. All the important Vaishnava Āḷvārs were already deified. This is in conformity with the epigraphical evidence cited earlier.

The description and study of the genesis of the structures of the temple can be concluded by outlining the probable *sequence* of constructional development :

I stage : The temple was of humble or modest proportions during the time of Bhūdattāḷvār, i.e., about the 7th century A.D. There are no structural or inscriptional vestiges of this period.

II stage : A thorough reconstruction of the temple into a bigger complex sometime around the middle of the 11th century A.D. during the time of Rājādhirāja I and his successor Kulōttunga I. The inscription of the former dated A.D. 1050 is found intact inside the sanctum of Nrisimha shrine. It mentions the presiding deity, Tiruvattiyūr Āḷvār. From the inscription, we can infer that the shrines of Nrisimha and the main sanctum were already there. Probably, the latter with its forward complements like the two *ardha maṇḍapas* and the *mahā maṇḍapa* were built in this time.

The reign of Kulōttunga I witnesses remarkable development. In his time, two more *prākāras* or courtyards (the second and the third) were added together with their entrance gateways and towers. Of these, the second *prākāra* seems to have come up slightly earlier, sometime before A.D. 1073 (3rd year of Kulōttunga I) for an inscription of that date is found on the basement of the entrance tower. Probably, a few years hence, the third *prākāra* with its gateway was built, because inscriptions on the walls there are dated in the 30th, 31st and 36th years of Kulōttunga I (i.e., A.D. 1100 to 1106). This *prākāra* wall with the kitchen in the south-east corner was built by Naralōkavīra, the famous minister of Kulōttunga I as attested by his beautiful Sanskrit inscription. The inscription specifically refers to the construction of a lofty, stone-built *prākāra*-wall that cannot be destroyed by time. The inscription is probably datable to the 30th year of Kulōttunga I. The compound wall of this courtyard was reconstructed by Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar in the 16th century.

III stage : Subsequently, various structures were built within these *prākāras* at different times in the 12th and 13 centuries, such as the Kariamāṇikkaperumāḷ shrine in the 11th year of Vikrama Chōḷa i.e. A.D. 1129; the Anantāḷvār shrine in A.D. 1212; the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* in A.D. 1236; the Tāyār shrine also round about the same time. Probably, at this stage, the fourth *prākāra* was an open one, not enclosed as it is now. The Anantasaras tank was there at its north-eastern side. The shrine of Chakrattāḷvār or Sudarsana which was originally built somewhere inside, was probably rebuilt in its present position. The Krishna shrine on the west bank of the tank was built probably in the latter half of the 13th century as already indicated.

Towards the end of the 13th century or, more probably, in the first half of the 14th century, the fourth courtyard was enclosed by a compound wall with a gateway and *gōpura* on its west. The eastern *gōpura* had not been built at this stage.

IV stage : The outline of the temple complex having been completed, towards the

end of the 13th century A.D. this stage only witnessed further amplification by the construction of a number of pillared halls, pavilions and ancillary shrines, besides the reconstruction of some of the existing structures. This was the period when there was a great increase in the numerous temple-rituals and festivals which necessitated many additional structures. Moreover, the Vijayanagar monarchs who zealously fostered the best Hindu traditions evinced sympathetic interest in fulfilling the religious aspirations of the people. Thus, under their patronage were built the towering *gōpura* on the east; the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*, the *Vāhana-maṇḍapa*, the *Tulābhāra-maṇḍapa*, the *Ūñjal-maṇḍapa* and the *Vasantha-maṇḍapa*, and probably separate shrines for Āḻvārs and āchāryas. This was indeed the brightest period in the history of the temple, when there was a great spurt in the celebration of festivals, in the elaborate arrangements for offerings, in the various benefactions of lands, jewels etc., as will be shown in the sequel.

NOTES

1. It is interesting to note in this connection that Appayya Dīkshitar (16th century A.D.) mentions the presence of five *prākāras* and compares them to the five *kōśas* or outer covers which encase the ultimate reality or the Paramatma (Varadarājastavam, v. 10).
2. G.P. refers to General Plan shown in Fig. 39.
3. The word *vimāna* connotes the entire temple in the general sense, but it is used especially in later South Inidan context only to refer to the superstructure over the sanctum from the *prastara* to *śikhara*. It has been used in this sense even in some *silpa* texts. *Śikhara* in the South Indian context only denotes that part of the *vimāna* between the *grīva* and the *stūpi*. For elucidation of these points see K.V. Soundara Rajan, *The Matrix of South Indian Architecture, JIH*, December 1965, pp. 792-793.
4. 448 of 1919.
5. 522 of 1919.
6. 519 of 1919.
7. 447 of 1919.
8. *E.I.* IV, No. 145.
9. 479 of 1919.
10. S. Rajan, *Srīrangam and Āḻvārs and Āchāryas*, Srīrangam, 1953, p. 15.
11. 590 of 1919.
12. Vide Chapter V.
13. *E.I.* VII, p. 132; *Aruḷāḷanādan Kōyilil Seyyum tiruppani āyirakkāl-tirumanḍapam.*
14. 595 of 1919, *S.I T.I.* No. 382.
15. *S.I.T.I.* No. 382.
16. Chapter IX.
17. 572 and 585 of 1919.
18. K.A.N. Sastri : *The Chōḷas* (1955).
19. 609 of 1919.
20. This inscription has not been noticed in the Epigraphical Reports so far. This was noticed *in situ* by the writer.
21. This information is found in an inscription vide 59 of 1919—V. Rangacharya, *Top List*, Vol. I, 341.
22. 648 of 1919.
23. 650 of 1919; *ARE* 1919-20, p. 115.
24. 646 of 1919.
25. See Chapter III for further details of this episode.
26. 631 of 1919.
27. For the illustration see Plate in Chapter XI.
28. *SITI*, I. No. 390, p. 375.
29. 543, 546 of 1919.
30. *SITI*, I. 406, p. 395.
31. 656 of 1919.
32. 487 of 1919.
33. 484 of 1919.
34. *Srīmat Dvāram Mahadvi Balipīṭagriyam Panindrahradam Gōpīnām Ramanam Varāhavpusham Srī Baṭṭanātham Munim Srīman tam Saṭavairiṇam Kaliripum Srī Bhaktisāram Munim Pūrnam Lakshmanayōginam Munivaran Ādyan Atha Dvarapan Srīmanmañjana manḍapam Sarasijam Hētīśa-Bhōgīśvaram Rāmam Nīlamaṇim Mahanasavaram Thārksyam Nrisimha Sriyam Sēnānyam Karibhūtaram Thadupari Srīpuṇyakōṭyām Harim Thanmadhyē varadam Ramasahasaram Vandē Thadiei Vratam.*

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE OF THE TEMPLE IN THE GROWTH OF SRĪ-VAISHNAVISM

INTRODUCTION

Early Tamil works of the Sangam period attest to the popularity of Vishnu-worship in the Tamil country. The *Tolkāppiam* mentions four Gods as the recognised guardian deities of the Tamil land, one each for the four geographical divisions of the land viz , the forest-land presided over by Māyōn (Vishnu), the hilly tract by Śēyōn (Muruga), cultivated plains by Vēṇḍan (Indra) and the coastal strips by Varuṇa.[1] The *Puranānūru* mentions Śiva, Balarāma, Vishnu and Muruga as the four principal Gods.[2] In the *Paripāḍal* also Balarāma and Krishna are mentioned together.[3]

The Tamil epic *Silappadikāram* makes clear reference to the Vishnu temples at Vēngaḍam, Arangam, Tirumāl-irum-sōlai.[4] That these three places were leading centres of Vishnu-worship is attested by the great importance attached to them by the Vaishnava saints, the Āḷvārs. So far as Kāñchi is concerned, it is spoken of as a centre of many religions.[5] The Vishnu temple at Vēhka in Kāñchi seems to have been well-known in the Sangam period. The *Perum-Pāṇāṟṟuppaḍai,* one of the Sangam anthologies called *Pattupāṭṭu* or *Ten Idyls*, makes a pointed reference to the Vishnu in reclining position at *Vehkanai* or *Vehka.*[6] It is very likely that the other Vishnu temples at Kāñchi came to prominence in the wake of the great Bhakti movement propagated by the Āḷvārs or the Vaishnava saints sometime between the sixth and the eighth centuries A.D. Like the Śaivite Nāyanmārs, the Vaishnavite Āḷvārs toured extensively in South India, addressing their soul-stirring songs to the idol-manifestations ((*archāyatāra*) of Vishnu of the various places. This movement gave a fresh impetus to the growth of Vishnu-worship in the Tamil country and the places sung by them came to be known as the *Divyadēsas* or the holy places which are now counted as 108 in number. In Kāñchi alone there are eighteen such shrines sung by the Āḷvārs and Srī Varadarājaswāmi is one among them, having been sung by Bhūdattāḻvār, one of the earliest Āḻvārs. As already noted, the Āḻvār mentions Him as *Attiyūrān* after the place. Because of the Ālvār's praise the place came to be known as Tiruvattiyūr or sacred Attiyūr, later on.[7] There is nothing to indicate that it was a prominent temple in the beginning. On the other hand, from the works of the other Āḷvārs, it is seen that Vehka was the most prominent Vishnu temple at Kāñchi. Both Poigai and Pēy Āḻvārs frequently refer to Vehka and rank it with other shrines like Srīrangam and Vēngaḍam etc. For instance in verse 77, Poigai mentions four places in which Lord Vishnu is manifest in four different postures—standing at Vēngaḍam, seated at Viṇṇagar, reclining at Vehka and walking at Kōvalūr.[8] Similarly Pēy Āḻvār a contemporary of Poigai and Bhūtam makes many references to Vehka and ranks it with Vēngaḍam, Srīrangam, Kuḍandai

(Kumbakōnam), Viṇṇagaram etc.[9] Another Āḻvār, Tirumalisai, was associated with the temple of Vehka to which he was deeply devoted. He has sung about the temple with great ecstasy. So, the Sangam poem *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai* and the hymns of the Āḻvārs quoted above, clearly indicate that Vehka was the most prominent Vishnu temple at Kāñchi.

In subsequent times however, i.e., in the age of the Āchāryas, the modest temple of Attiyūr grew in importance and in the course of time completely overshadowed the other Vishnu temples of Kāñchi. Known as Hastigiri, it became one of the three most important places for a Srī-Vaishnava. The three in their order of importance are Kōil, Tirumālai and Perumāḷ-kōil, which are respectively Srīrangam, Vēngaḍam and Hastigiri at Kāñchi. These three are considered the holiest of the holies. Hastigiri attained this eminent position mainly due to its association with the life and activities of Srī Rāmānuja, the propounder and the establisher of the Visishtādvaitic philosophy. A galaxy of eminent *āchāryas* noted for their piety and literary accomplishments, some of whom were elder (like Tirukkachinambi) and some younger contemporaries of Rāmānuja (like Kūrattāḻvār) were attracted to this temple.

Rāmānuja spent the most formative years of his life here and is said to have received injunctions from Lord Varadarāja through Tirukkachinambi which served as the guideline for Rāmānuja's Visishṭādvaitic philosophy. Rāmānuja himself considered Hastigiri as one of the four most important places which a Srī-Vaishnava had to meditate during the daily *Sandhya*-prayers, the other three being Srīrangam, Vēngaḍam and Yatisailam or Tirunārāyaṇapuram in Mysore. All these factors naturally bestowed on the temple a position of importance in the eyes of his followers. Moreover, Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple was one of the first to receive the impact of Rāmānuja's teachings and reforms relating to the form of worship, the code of religious conduct and procedures regarding festivals etc. It was hence looked upon as one of the 'model-temples' to be followed by the numerous smaller shrines in other towns and villages.

Subsequent to Rāmānuja, the temple not only maintained its eminent position but also registered further progress and reached the zenith of glory during the Vijayanagar period. Eminent āchāryas like Naḍādūr Ammāl, Vēdānta Dēsika, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni have paid their homage to Lord Varadarāja, the presiding deity of this temple. Members of several distinguished *āchārya purusha*-families, and Jīyars (ascetics), were connected with this temple. Several seminaries or *maṭhas* were situated in this temple for the propagation of *Rāmānuja-darsana.*

Rāmānuja's school of Vaishnavism is called the *Srī-Sampradāya* or *Srī-Vaishnavism* and its philosophy is known as the *Visishṭādvaita* or qualified non-dualism. The latter term is explained elsewhere in this chapter. The significance of the term *Srī-Vaishnavism* may briefly be explained here. It signifies only a special facet of Vishnu-worship, already popular in the theistic works like the *Paripādal* and the works of the Āḻvārs. In this scheme Srī or Lakshmi plays an important role. In a sense, *Srī* as the *Purushākāra* or mediatrix dominates the conception. She serves as a link between the devotee and the Lord and recommends even a sinner for the Lord's mercy. Her position as the sharer of all powers and responsibilities with Her consort Nārāyaṇa is emphasised by the prefix *Srī* in the words *Srī-Vaishnavism*

or *Srī-Sampradāya*. She is not only the mediatrix but also first in the line of preceptors or *āchāryas*. It is the belief of the *Srī-Vaishnavas* that the divine teachings of the *Pāñcharātra* were transmitted by the Lord to *Srī* who in turn communicated them to Viswaksēna or Sēnainātha, who passed them on to Nammāḻvār. Thus, the line of *Srī-Vaishnava* preceptors begins with *Srī* and includes Viswaksēna, Nammāḻvār and many successive *āchāryas*. Rāmānuja comes eighth in this line. Subsequent to Rāmānuja, the line divides itself into two, one representing the *Srī-Bāshya* or in the popular parlance the Northern School and the other representing the *Prabhandic* or the Southern School.

The association of Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple with the Vaishnava saints and teachers is studied under three sections.

Section 1

THE AGE OF THE ĀCHĀRYAS

Sources : The inscriptions of this temple, though very valuable in many other respects, are not of much help to us regarding the lives and activities of the early *āchāryas* like Tirukkachinambi, Kūrattāḻvār or even Rāmānuja. It is indeed a puzzle why the contemporary epigraphs which furnish us with numerous details of kings, nobles and their gifts are so silent about such eminent religious leaders who have dedicated themselves to the cause of *Srī-Vaishnavism*. We do, however, get some useful information regarding the installation of Rāmānuja's image in this temple, the provisions for propagating his tenets etc., but they are comparatively scanty and they hardly do justice to the great missionary work he did. So, one has necessarily to depend on the traditional works like the Vaishnava *Guruparamparas* or hagiologies, supplemented in a few cases by the compositions of the *āchāryas* themselves. For the period subsequent to the 15th century, however, the inscriptions are extremely useful. A number of *āchārya-purushas*, Jīyars and other leaders, and their connections with the temple, are recorded.

Tirukkachinambi

Among the elder contemporaries of Rāmānuja, Tirukkachinambi was known to be most deeply attached to the service of Lord Varadarāja. He was born in Pūndamalli, about 20 miles east of Kāñchi in the Vaisya (Cheṭṭiār) family. It is said that every day he used to take flowers to Kāñchi for Lord Varadarāja. He did "*ālavaṭṭa kainkarya*" (fanning service). In course of time, he won the unique reputation of the only person who could converse with Lord Pēraruḷāḷa. Humble and devoted, he was venerated by all. When he talked, people considered that the Lord spoke through him. He was revered by all people to whom he was a rare jewel among men living at Kāñchi. Once, he went to Srīrangam, which was in those days the headquarters, as it were, of Vaishnavism, and met Perianambi (Mahāpūrna) and Āḷavandār, who praised his services to Pēraruḷāḷa. After the formal initiation, Āḷavandār conferred on him the *dāsyanāma pēraruḷāḷadāsa* i.e.. the servant of Pēraruḷāḷa. After spending some time at Srīrangam in the service of his preceptor, he returned to Kāñchi and resumed his service there. Another title which is said to have been conferred upon him by Lord Varadarāja was "Gajēndra-

dāsa". He is said to have founded a temple for his favourite deity at Pūndamalli.

Rāmānuja (circa 1017-1137 A.D.)

Among the four main centres of his activity (Srīrangam, Tirumalai, Kāñchi and Melkote), Rāmānuja seemed to have had special attachment to Kāñchi and the Varadarājaswāmi temple because he spent his early and most formative years here. His disciple Tiruvarangattammudanār emphasised this point when he called him by the appellation *"Ten Attiyūrkaḷalinaikīl pūnda-anbāḷan"*, meaning one who served at the feet of the Lord Attiyūr.[10]

Rāmānuja was born in Sriperumbudur in 1017 A.D. His father imparted to him preliminary education. After the latter's death, Rāmānuja moved to Kāñchi along with his wife and mother. There is a tradition that he lived in the first house on the north-western end of the Sannidhi Street on the east of the temple. He studied Vēdānta under Yādavaprakāśa, a great Advaitic scholar at Kāñchi. Rāmānuja's thirst for knowledge and sincere approach soon made him a favourite student and disciple of Yādavaprakāśa. But, as time passed on, Rāmānuja found Yādavaprakāśa's explanations or interpretations of Vēdānta unacceptable to him. On one or two occasions, he modestly put forth his view which the teacher considered an affront to him. He regarded Rāmānuja a heretic and working against the hitherto accepted notions of *advaita* or non-dualism. Yādavaprakāśa is said to have even plotted to kill Rāmānuja while on pilgrimage to the north. But differences in interpretation of concepts like *"Brahmam"* again arose and Rāmānuja had to leave the school politely. Straight he went to Tirukkachinambi, the pious and venerable saint doing humble fanning service to Lord Varadarāja. He requested him to accept him as a disciple. Nambi told Rāmānuja that he was not well-versed in the *Śāstras* and had no formal education and was only doing some bodily service to the temple. For Rāmānuja, however, true devotion to God and not mere knowledge was the real index of greatness. Intensively moved by Rāmānuja's sincere approach, Nambi asked him to bring daily a jarful of water from a well, known as the 'śāla-well', for the worship at the Varadarāja temple which Rāmānuja faithfully carried out. Even today, this practice of bringing water daily from the same 'śāla-well', about two miles away, is continued in this temple. This is in accordance with the Vaishnavite principle that bodily service or *kainkarya* to one's personal God would give a sense of humility necessary for true devotion.

One important episode mentioned in the Vaishnava hagiology is that Lord Varadarāja chose Tirukkachinambi as his medium to convey to Rāmānuja the six famous tenets of Visishṭādvaita, which served as the guideline for Rāmānuja's teachings. Tirukkachi Nambi advised Rāmānuja to seek guidance under Peria Nambi at Srīrangam.

Meanwhile, Peria-nambi with his wife was coming towards Kāñchi to meet Rāmānuja. They met each other at Madurāntakam, about 40 miles south-east of Kāñchi on the main road to Srīrangam The initiation ceremony took place there, after which they all returned to Kāñchi. Rāmānuja set apart a portion of his own house for them to live in and looked after all their comforts. He studied the Tamil *prabhandams* at the master's feet. Though Rāmānuja rose above all caste distinctions, his wife did not keep pace with her husband's liberal and enlightened views. She

picked up quarrels with Peria-nambi's wife on trivial matters which made Peria-nambi and his wife quit their house and return to Srīrangam. Rāmānuja was disgusted with the petty-mindedness of his wife and felt deeply distressed for causing difficulties to his Guru. Later on, he renounced the home and became a *sanyāsin* (ascetic). He came to be known as Rāmānujamuni. He had his own *maṭha*, where his nephew Kandāḍai Mudali-Āṇḍān and Kūrēsa or Kūrattāḷvār joined as his disciples. Thereafter, they became inseparable companions of Rāmānuja, taking part in religious and intellectual pursuits. Yādavaprakāśa, it is said, also accepted the Visishṭādvaita philosophy and became a Vaishnavite. He was given the name Gōvinda Jīyar. He also wrote a book *'Yatidharmasamucchaya'*. Rāmānuja's fame spread far and wide; his path of devotion and scholarship were universally acknowledged.

Meanwhile, Peria-nambi who was at Srīrangam wanted to instal Rāmānuja as his successor-head of the *Srī-Vaishnava* monastery (*maṭha*) at Srīrangam and thus fulfil the desire of the departed *āchārya*—Āḷavaṇḍār. Peria-nambi sent Tiruvarangaperumāḷ Arayar (Vararanga) to Kāñchi for inviting Rāmānuja. Arayar was specially sent for this because, he could sing his prayer beautifully before Pēraruḷāḷa and who would be moved to grant the desired boon, namely, sending Rāmānuja to Srīrangam. Arayar succeeded in his mission. Rāmānuja accompanied by his companions Mudali-āṇḍān and Kūrattāḷvār and Arayar left Kāñchi and settled down at Srīrangam. He then completed his studies under his teachers, namely, Tiruvarangapperumāḷ Arayar and Tirumalai Āṇḍān at Srīrangam. He also went to Tirukkōṭṭiyūr (in Rāmanāthapuram district) and learnt the sacred *Tirumandiram* from Tirukkōṭṭiyūr-nambi. Thus, Rāmānuja had the unique opportunity to study different aspects of the religious lore from Peria-nambi, Tirumalai-nambi, Tirukkōṭṭiyūr-nambi, Tirumalai Āṇḍān and Tiruvarangapperumāḷ Arayar who were all the disciples of the great Yāmunāchārya or Āḷavaṇḍār. With this rich legacy and his own in-born genius, Rāmānuja was considered eminently fitted to occupy the seat of the *Āchārya* at Srīrangam adorned by such worthies like Nāthamuni, Āḷavaṇḍār and Peria-nambi.

Srīrangam became thenceforward the chief centre of his activities. He made some wholesome reforms in the temple there, which are graphically detailed in the *kōil-oḷugu*, the temple-record of Srīrangam.[11] The other two temples in which he is said to have introduced some administrative or organisational reforms were Tirumalai and Tirunārāyaṇapuram (Melkote).[12] Though Kāñchi did not figure as prominently in his later life as before, the *Guruparamparai* mentions that during his visits to Tirumalai and North India in connection with the collection of manuscripts for writing his *Srī Bāshyas*, he visited Kāñchi to seek the blessings of Lord Pēraruḷāḷa and Tirukkachi-nambi. Further details of Rāmānuja's life like his flight to the Mysore country consequent on the fear of Chōḷa persecution, his conversion of the Hoysāḷa king to Vaishnavism, his composition of the *magnum-opus* the *Srī Bāshya* commentary etc., are too well known.[13] He became the leading light of the Vaishnavite world by his teachings and reforms which had far-reaching effect on the subsequent history of Srī-Vaishnavism in South India.

The three important acts of Rāmānuja were : *firstly*, he refuted the *māyavāda* of Śankara and interpreted the *Brahmasūtras* and *Upanishads* and the *Bhāgavat Gītā* in the light of his own Visishṭādvaitic system; *secondly*, he popularised the *Divya-prabhan-*

dams or the divine songs of the Āḷvārs; and *thirdly*, he inspired and trained a line of worthy disciples to propagate his tenets.

The essential tenets of Rāmānuja's Visishṭādvaita philosophy may briefly be recalled : Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Lord, was endowed with all auspicious qualities like omniscience (*jñāna*), strength (*bala*), sovereignty (*aiśvarya*), constancy (*virya*), power (*śakti*) and lustre (*tējas*), capable of granting salvation to those who surrendered upto Him absolutely.[14] In the place of abstract, impersonal God or *Nirguṇa-Brahmam* of the *Advaita* school, Rāmānuja justified the need for a personal God, possessed of all good qualities. He repudiated the doctrine of illusoriness of the material world and the finite self and postulated that ultimate Reality is one in which the material world and the finite self find a necessary place. He emphasised the importance of self-surrender or *prapatti* as a means to receive the grace of the Lord. Just as *Paramātma* or the Supreme Lord is personal and individual, the *Jīva* or the soul is also personal and individual by nature and once emitted, lives for ever. It is never merged in the *Brahmam* or Bhagavān.[15] His doctrine of *Bhakti* and *Prapatti* had a powerful influence on the outlook of the *Srī-Vaishnavas*. His work *Gatyatraya* is an outstanding example of *prapatti* literature which contains his devotional out-pourings on Lord Nārāyaṇa and His consort Lakshmi. His philosophy inspired many devotional poems during and after his life time, such as Kūrattālvār's *Pañchastavams*, one of which is the famous *Varadarājastavam*, on Lord Varadarāja. Rāmānuja advocated the path of devotion and self-surrender for all castes and even arranged for the entry of outcastes into the temple at Melkote. He accepted Tirukkachinambi of the Vaisya caste as his teacher. He had non-Brahman discipleslike Piḷḷai-Urangāvalli-dāsar. He gave them a definite place in the Vaishnava fold by encouraging them to wear the *puṇḍra* (mark on the forehead), to dress themselves like the *Srī-Vaishnavas* and to study the *Divya-prabhandams*.[16]

Rāmānuja did much to popularise the compositions of the Tamil saints and particularly the *Tiruvōymoḻi* of Nammāḻvār which contained the truths and tenets of the *upanishads*.[17] In this he was only continuing the work started by Nāthamuni and Āḷavaṇḍār. Rāmānuja authorised Kurukēsa or Ten-kurukaipirān-piḷḷān, son of Tirumalai-nambi, to compose an authoritative commentary on *Tiruvōymoḻi* which the latter did. It was known as the *Ārāyirappāḍi* or the *Six-thousand*. It was the first commentary which was followed by a number of others like the *Nine-thousand*, the *Twelve-thousand*, the *Thirtysix-thousand* etc. It was Rāmāṇuja, who was again largely responsible for arranging to chant the Tamil *Prabhandams* in the temples along with the vēdic hymns during the period of worship and festivals.[18] Though the practice might have started first at Srīrangam, it soon became an essential feature in all Vishnu temples. Today, the "*Iyal Ghōṣṭi*" or the *Prabhanda*-reciters are given precedence and they form the vanguard of the temple processions. Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple is one of the few centres where there had been an unbroken line of the *Prabhanda*-reciters and even today, one can see one of their largest and the most impressive gatherings during the annual Vaisāka and other festivals. From the inscriptions of the temple, we learn that even in A.D. 1129 during the life time of Rāmānuja the first Tamil *Prabhandas* of Poigai Ālvār and Bhūdattāḷvār were popular here.[19] A record of the 14th century refers to the recital of *Tiruvōymoḻi* of Saṭagōpa at this temple.[20]

The third important act of Rāmānuja was the creation of a set of spiritual leaders or *āchārya-purushas* to propagate the Visishṭādvaitic philosophy far and wide. He appointed seventyfour *Simhāsanatipatis* out of whom he authorised a few to devote themselves for the exposition of his *Srī Bāshya* in Sanskrit and the rest for the exposition of the Tamil *Prabhandams*. This clearly shows that Rāmānuja recognised the importance of the Tamil *Prabhandams* which alone could be easily understood by the vast majority of Tamil population being in their own mother-tongue. It was also the duty of the *āchārya-purushas* to maintain the form of temple-worship as modelled by him.

Subsequent history has shown that the members of these distinguished families rendered and are still rendering great service to the cause of spreading Rāmānuja's teachings. They have carried his faith to the distant villages and homes not only in Tamil country but far beyond in the Andhra, Mysore and Upper India too. At important Vaishnavite centres at Tirumalai, Srīrangam and Kāñchi, the scions of the families are still engaged in the service of the temple and dissemination of religious knowledge etc. The association of many of these *āchārya-purushas* with Kāñchi will be mentioned in the sequel.

Rāmānuja's special attachment to Lord Varadarāja

Rāmānuja's special devotion to Lord Pēraruḷāḷa of Kāñchi was already briefly mentioned. A few more incidents can be recounted to illustrate this point. The *Guruparamparai* informs us that when Kūrattāḷvār's eyes were plucked by the Chōḷa king, Rāmānuja exhorted the former to do *prapatti* to Lord Varadarāja and compose a laudatory poem on the Lord. Kūrattālvār is said to have composed his famous *Varadarājastavam*, a string of hundred beautiful verses on the deity. They are recited in the Varadarājaswāmi temple on certain important occasions.

Another contemporary of Rāmānuja was Yajñamūrti who was first an Advaitin and later brought to the Vaishnava fold by Rāmānuja. As Rāmānuja could do this only by the grace of Aruḷāḷa or Dēvarāja, he called his new convert as Dēvarājamuni or Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ-Emberumānār and assigned him the duty of offering daily *pūja* or worship to Lord Pēraruḷāḷa kept for his (Rāmānuja's) private worship (*ārādhana*).

Rāmānuja's deification in the temple

The impact of Rāmānuja's life and activities on the temple can hardly be exaggerated. His association with the temple in the formative years of his life and his frequent visits to the same gave considerable importance to the temple in the esteem of his associates and devotees. Many of the reforms in the temple set-up and form of worship he introduced at Srīrangam had their influence in this temple as will be seen in later chapters.[21] In recognition of his great services, Rāmānuja was deified in the Varadarājaswāmi temple within 55 years after his demise. This is attested by a record of Kulōttunga III dated A.D. 1191 which informs us that an influential Chōḷa chieftain by name Iḷaiāḷvān Kālingarāyan of Neṭṭūr consecrated the image of Emberumānār (Rāmānuja) and donated all the taxes accruing from two villages to meet the expenses for the offerings to the deity.[22] The same donor Iḷaiāḷvān made special provisions for the *Bhāshyavritti* or exposition of *Rāmānuja-bhāsya*. Ilaiālvān was another name of Rāmānuja. The donor was evidently a great devotee

of Rāmānuja, whose name, 'Iḷaiāḷvān', he adopted as his own.

Section 2

THE POST-RĀMĀNUJA PERIOD

Many of Rāmānuja's younger contemporaries like Embār, Baṭṭar, Kurukēsa and Nanjīyar who lived during the latter part of the 12th century, continued to serve the cause of *Srī-Vaishnavism* as expounded by their great master Rāmānuja by writing commentaries and discoursing on the subject to their followers. Indeed, the post-Rāmānuja period was marked by a growing interest among his followers in the interpretation and popularisation of his teachings which came to be known as *Rāmānuja-darśanam.* A series of commentaries on Nammāḷvār's *Tiruvōymoḷi* and the *prabhandams* of the other Āḷvārs were written in accordance with Rāmānuja's avowed desire to popularise the works of the Tamil saints. Another development which gradually reared its head and which Rāmānuja could hardly have foreseen, was the emergence of certain differences of opinion and interpretation among his followers concerning chiefly (1) the *prapatti-mārga* or the path of surrender and (2) the relative importance of the Sanskrit and Tamil texts, besides various other matters. Some of the followers gave importance to the Sanskrit texts and specialised in the study and exposition of *Srī Bāshya*, while others specialised in the Tamil *prabhandams* of the Āḷvārs. In course of time, two distinct modes of expounding the *Vaishnava-darśana* or system came to be recognised. They were the *Srī-Bāshya-pravachana* and the *Drāviḍāmnaya* or the *Bhagavat-Vishya-pravachana.* The former consisted of the study of *vēdānta-sūtras* with the help of Rāmānuja's commentary on them. *Srī-Bhagavat-Vishya-pravachana* meant largely the study of the *Nālāyira-Divya-prabhandam* and the *Tiruvōymoḷi* in particular, with the various commentaries that appeared in a quick succession. But these two modes of exposition gradually gave rise to the appearance of two separate schools with two *paramparas* or hagiologies or succession lists.

In course of time, the former came to be known as the Sanskritists or the Vaḍakalai school and the latter as the *Prabhandic* or the Tenkalai school. Kāñchi was the centre of the Vaḍakalai school while Srīrangam was the centre of Tenkalai school. But it should be remembered that the differences in interpretation or language did not lead to any immediate schism or cleavage in the Srī-Vaishnava fold which had the common object of serving the *Rāmānuja-darśana*. Even regarding the texts, the difference was one of preference. In fact, most of the followers of Rāmānuja like Embār, Baṭṭar, Kurukēsa, Nanjīyar, Nampiḷḷai Periavāchān Piḷḷai, Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya, Vēdānta Dēsika and others were well-versed in both Sanskrit and Tamil lore. In their works, they struck a balance by adopting the *maṇipravāḷa* style, a free mixture of Sanskrit and Tamil words, which was peculiar to this period. So, the view of some scholars that the *āchāryas* of the Tenkalai school like Nampiḷḷai or Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya were not well-versed in the Sanskrit texts is as untenable as to say that Vēdānta Dēsika did not know the Tamil *prabhandams*. The works of the *āchāryas* of *Prabhandic* school were a series of attempts to interpret the Tamil hymns in terms of the known Sanskrit authorities and hence, their works were full of citations and parables from the *Gītā*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* etc. Similarly, Kurukēsa and Vēdānta Dēsi-

ka of the so-called Vaḍakalai group wrote works in Tamil—the former his commentary on *Tiruvōymoḻi* and the latter several poems. Nor was there any antagonism between these two groups. In fact, except for the past two or three hundred years when the differences assumed a sectarian bias, the post-Rāmānuja period was marked by a remarkable unity of purpose in spite of diversity of interpretation. The period was conspicuous by the absence of any sectarian rancour within the Vaishnava fold such as the one witnessed in more recent years. The doctrinal differences that were simmering got crystallised into two distinct groups or sects with two different sets of *Guruparamparais* or lines of *āchāryas*, two different types of sect-marks etc., much later than Vēdānta Dēsika's time.[23] In the post-Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's time, we can see the traces or the beginning of the cleavage though they were by no means sharp even then. In many of his commentaries Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni quotes as his authorities not only from the works of the *āchāryas* of his own school but also from those of Naḍādūr Ammāḷ, Srutaprakāśika Baṭṭar, Vēdnāta Dēsika and even the latter's son, Naina Varadāchārya. From this, one thing is clear that even during his time the differences did not assume any sectarian rift. His *upadēsaratnamālai* gives the hierarchy of the *āchāryas* of the *prabhandic* school, whereas the *Guruparamparai* of the III Brahmatantra-svatantra Jīyar gives the list of *āchāryas* of the Vaḍakalai school. Upto Rāmānuja there is agreement between the two versions. Only after Rāmānuja, the hierarchy is divided into two lines.

Rāmānuja (circa A.D. 1017-1137)

Prabhandic School
- Baṭṭar (12th century)
- Nanjīyar (12th century)
- Nampiḷḷai (13th century)
- Periavāchān Piḷḷai (13th century)
- Vaḍakku Tiruvīdi Piḷḷai (13th century)
- Piḷḷai Lokāchārya (13th & 14th century—elder contemporary of Vēdānta Dēsika)
- Maṇavāḷapperumāḷ Nāinār (do)
- Tiruyōymoḻi Piḷḷai (14th century)
- Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni (A.D. 1370-1443)

Srī Bāshya School
- Kurukēsa (12th century)
- Engaḷ Āḻvān (12th c.)
- Naḍādūr Ammāḷ (13th c.)
- Ātrēya Rāmānuja (13th c.)
- Vēdānta Dēsika (A.D. 1268-1369)
- Naina Varadāchārya (14th century)

The *āchāryas* of the *Prabhandic* school mentioned above settled down at Srīrangam and successively held the apostolic leadership there, while Kāñchi became the centre of the Northern or *Srī Bāshya* school. We know for certain that the last four *āchāryas*

of the Vaḍakalai school viz., Naḍādūr Ammāḷ, Ātrēya Rāmānuja, Vēdānta Dēsika and his son Naina Varadāchārya had Kāñchi as the centre of their activities.

The main doctrinal differences between these two schools may be summed up here.[24]

(i) Though both the schools were agreed on the necessity of *prapatti* or *saranāgati* i.e., self-surrender unto God as the path to salvation, the Vaḍakalai school held that self-effort was needed on the part of the devotee. He should hold to God even as the young monkey holds to the mother (*Markaṭanyāya* or the monkey analogy). The Tenkalai view is that God's grace (*kripā*) is spontaneous, unconditional and irresistible (*nirhātuka*) and descends on the living beings even if there is no self-effort on the latter's part. It is like the case of the mother-cat which holds its young one in its mouth even though there is no effort on the latter's part (*Mārjāranyāya* or analogy of the cat).

(ii) Another doctrinal disagreement concerns the position of Srī or Lakshmi. According to the Northern School, Lakshmi, like the Lord, is indistinguishable from the Lord, equally infinite and illimitable. She too can grant final emancipation or *mōksha*. The Southern School holds her to be a finite being (*Jīva*), though divine. She is a superior servant of God. She is the mediatrix (*Purushakāra*) between the sinning folk and the Lord. Because of infinite mercy she recommends to the Lord to grant salvation, but she cannot grant it herself.

(iii) Another important point of difference is in connection with the caste system. The northern school holds that while all the Bhāgavatas are to be treated with reverence, worshipping them should only be in strict accordance with the status of their birth. It also holds the view that people of the lower caste are not entitled to learn *mūlamantra* and *praṇava*. But the southern school holds liberal views on these matters.[25] According to it, all Bhāgavatas (devotees) are to be considered equally high, born without distinction. True devotees, to whichever caste they belong, are worthy of honour and worship as āchāryas. The *varna* or status of birth will wither away, the moment one becomes a blessed soul (*Jāti naśikkum*). The leaders of this school gave greater prominence to the Tamil saints—āḷvārs—most of whom belonged to the lower caste. Similarly, *āchāryas* belonging to lower castes like Tirukkachi-nambi, Piḷḷai-Urangāvaḷḷi-dāsar are frequently praised in their writings.

To these doctrinal differences were added a few more minor social and ritual differences too. The differences are on matters like the efficacy of the pilgrimage, the details of ceremonials to be observed on certain occasions, the shape of the sect-mark, etiquette, the relation between the ascetics (*sanyāsins*) and householders, the tonsure of widow etc.[26] On the whole, the prabhandic school held more progressive views on these matters. For example, it prohibited the tonsure of the widows as an obnoxious practice.[27]

But curiously, in the early stages, the doctrinal differences took a keen edge only in academic level. There was never a check on free social harmony at home or temple. But only in the recent centuries when the differences in the other forms like the caste-mark, attachment to the rituals, assumed a greater importance, the division has widened to make them almost two sub-castes. Particularly, the scramble for control over the temple is conspicuously seen in the 19th century records.

With these brief introductory remarks, let us review the activities of these *āchāryas* in relation to the growth of *Srī-Vaishnavas* at Kāñchi in a chronological manner.

Baṭṭar and Kurukēsa were younger contemporaries of Rāmānuja. The former was the son of Kūrattāḻvār and is said to have succeeded Rāmānuja in the apostolic seat at Srīrangam.[28] He wrote a commentary on the *Vishnu-Sahasranāma* besides *Srī Ranganātha stōtram.* In the latter work he briefly mentions the Varadarāja temple at Kāñchi or 'Karigiri' as one of the important places dear to Rāmānuja's heart.[29] Kurukēsa or Piḻḻān was the author of the first commentary on *Tiruvōymoḻi* known as the *Six-thousand.* Baṭṭar's disciple was Nanjīyar who was an Advaitin in his early days and was brought to the Vaishnava fold by Baṭṭar. Nanjīyar also wrote a commentary on the *Tiruvōymoḻi* known as the *Nine-thousand.* Engal Āḻvār or Vishnu Chittārya also lived in the latter half of the 12th century.

In the first half of the 13th century lived Nampiḻḻai, the disciple of Nanjīyar.[30] He was a greater scholar and thinker, whose discourses on *Tiruvōymoḻi* were committed to writing by his disciple Vaḍakku-tiru-vīdipiḻḻai. Nampiḻḻai's commentary came to be known as the *Īḍu* or the *Thirtysix-thousand.* The *Īḍu* is noted for its remarkable literary flourishes and incisive comments and is therefore very popular with a large section of the *Srī-Vaishnavas.* Under the inspiring leadership of Nampiḻḻai, his two other disciples Peria Vāchān Piḻḻai and Pinbaḻagiya-perumāḻ-Jīyar did signal service to the cause of *Srī-Vaishnavism,* the former by composing a comprehensive commentary on all the *Four-thousand prabhandams* of the Ālvārs and the latter by writing his famous *Guruparamparai,* a succession list of *Āchāryas* upto the time of his teacher, Nampiḻḻai. This work, it is important to remember, does not make any difference between the two schools and indeed deals with the life of Kurukēsa and Engal Āḻvān as well. There are a number of references in this work to the Kāñchi temple, particularly, in connection with the life-history of Rāmānuja and his contemporaries which have been noted earlier.

A contemporary of Nampiḻḻai was Naḍādūr Ammāḻ (circa A.D. 1200-1250) or Varadāchārya who was a disciple of Engaḻ Āḻvān. He was the grandson of Naḍādūr Āḻvān the nephew of Rāmānuja and one of the seventyfour Simhāsanādhipatis. Naḍādūr Ammāḻ is said to have preferred his native place Kāñchi for his residence and activities. He is said to have given regular discourses on the *Srī Bāshyas* in the premises of the Varadarājaswāmi temple at Kāñchi. The substance of his lectures and interpretations of Rāmānuja's *Srī Bāshya* were committed to writing by his talented disciple Sudarsana-Baṭṭar. The work was called the *Srutaprakāśika.* It was an important contribution which made the understanding of the *Srī Bāshya* easier. Naḍādūr Ammāḻ's other works were: the *Tatvasāram, Prapannapārijātam* and the *Paradhvāti Pañchagam.* In the first work of the above list, he summed up the teachings of the *Upanishads.* In the *Paradhvāti-Pañchagam,* he refers to Hastigiri (Varadarājaswāmi temple) as one of the three most important among the 108 holy Vishnu shrines.[31]

The son and successor of Vaḍakku-tiruvīdi Piḻḻai was the famous Piḻḻai Lōkāchārya considered a leading light of the *Prabhandic* school. According to the traditional account, he was born in *Kali* 4366 or A.D. 1265. A profound scholar and prolific writer, he composed several treatises like the famous *Tattvatraya, Mumukshupaḍi* and *Srī Vachana Bhūshaṇa* wherein he has dealt with the doctrine

of *prapatti* in all its bearings. His *Srī Vachana Bhūshaṇa* is an important work which contains a number of terse aphorisms (in the *maṇipravāḷa* style) on various subjects such as Srī as the mediatrix (*Purushakāra*), the value of bodily service (*kainkarya*) to God, devotion to God, devotion to the teacher (*āchāryabhimāna*), the import of *prapatti*, the greatness of the *archa* or the idol form etc., which have all become the foundation for the Tenkalai school. His writings are considered to be the authoritative interpretation of the tenets of the Āḻvārs and Rāmānuja by the *Srī-Vaishnavas* of the *Prabhandic* school. Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya's younger brother Aḻagiya-manavāḷa perumāḷ Nāinār was another distinguished scholar and commentator who did much to popularise the greatness of Āḻvārs and the tenets of the Prabhandic school, wrote commentaries on Tamil hymns like the *Amalanādipirān* and Āṇḍāḷ's *Tiruppāvai*. But his best-known work is the *Āchārya-Hridayam* in which he brilliantly expatiates on the heart (*Hridaya*) of Nammāḻvār. In it, while writing about the Āḻvār's eclectic outlook, which knew no caste or class restrictions, the author cites many classic examples where the true devotees belonging to low station in life have been honoured and worshipped by people of higher class. Srī Rāmā regarded the tribal chief Guga as his brother. Similarly, the person of humble origin who did '*paṇippu kainkarya*' at Tirumalai (Pushpa-maṇḍapa) was venerated by the ruling king Toṇḍai-mān; Tirukkachi-nambi who did the fanning (*ālavatta*) service to the Lord at Hastigiri (Tyāga-maṇḍapa) was honoured by Rāmānuja as his guru; Tiruppān-āḻvār, an outcaste who sang his soul-stirring songs addressed to the Lord Ranganātha at Srīrangam (Bhōga-maṇḍapa) was venerated by Ulōgasāranga-Mahāmuni.[32]

Naḍādūr Ammāḷ's disciple was Ātrēya Rāmānuja *alias* Appiḷḷār who lived in Kāñchi about the middle of the 13th century A.D. He also wrote a commentary on the *Srī-Bāshya*. He was the maternal uncle of the great Vēdānta Dēsika. The latter in his works frequently expresses his indebtedness to his uncle and *guru*. In one context he says that he is merely giving outward expression to what is inscribed in his mind by his *āchārya*.[33]

Vēdānta Dēsika (A.D. 1268-1369)

The traditional date of Vēdānta Dēsika's birth is *Kali* 4371 or Ś 1190 corresponding to A.D. 1268. He is said to have lived for a full span of 100 years. He was born in Tūppiḷ, a suburb of Kāñchipuram. His father Anantasūri was an *āchārya-purusha*. His mother Tōtādriyamma was the sister of Ātrēya Rāmānuja. The latter was a renowned scholar and Vēnkaṭanātha studied under him and mastered different aspects of the religious literature at a comparatively young age. He was endowed with retentive memory, critical mind and gift for interpretation. Added to this was his innate poetic talents. All these made him a versatile writer whose works were characterised by beauty of diction and deep spiritual insight. He was a poet, philosopher and controversialist who won coveted titles like the *Kavitārka-simha*, the lion of poets and philosophers and *Sarvatantra-svatantra*, the master of all science and knowledge. His life-story can briefly be sketched here.

As a young boy, Vēnkaṭanātha used to accompany his maternal uncle Ātrēya Rāmānuja to the discourses given by Naḍādūr Ammāḷ. He showed extraordinary grasp of even complicated subjects and mastered the Vedas, the Vedāngas, *āgamas* etc. He is said to have entered into a controversy with Vidyāraṇya and defeated

him. He also arbitrated in the polemical dispute between Vidyāraṇya and Akshabyāmuni.[34] He visited places like Tiruvēndipuram, Srimūshnam and Srīrangam. It was at Srīrangam that he defeated the Advaita scholar Krishnamisra and the titles of *Vēdāntāchārya and Sarvatantra-svatantrar* were conferred on him. He composed his famous works like the *Satadūshini*, *Sankalpa-Sūryōdaya*, *Yādavabhyūdaya*, *Yatirāja-saptāti*, *Srī-stuti*, *Bhū-stuti* etc. It was during his stay at Srīrangam that the place was overrun by the Muslim invaders who sacked the temple. This compelled many *Srī-Vaishnava* leaders to leave the place or commit self-immolation. Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya saved the idol of Ranganātha by taking it to the forests, while Vēdānta Dēsika had to retire to Satyamangalam near Coimbatore. He is said to have saved the copy of the *Srutaprakāśika* commentary on the *Srī-Bāshya.* He came back to Srīrangam and spent his last days peacefully.[35]

His intimate connection with Kāñchi and his special love for Lord Varadarāja, are evident in many of his works. Though he has composed verses on many temples at Kāñchi such as Tiruvehka, Dīpaprakāsar, Ashtabhuja, he had special attachment for Lord Varadarāja. His *Varadarāja-Pañchāsat* contains fifty stanzas in praise of the Lord which would serve as an ideal *prapatti* prayer-song for the worshippers. It is also a good elucidation of the philosophy of *Visishṭādvaita.* This work of Dēsika is recited on certain important occasions in front of Lord Varadarāja.[36] But perhaps one of the most heartfelt tributes he had paid to his favourite deity is to be found in his *Vairāgya-Pañchaka* which he wrote on the occasion when he declined the rewards and invitation from the contemporary Vijayanagar court.[37] His Tamil poem *Aḍaikkalapattu* also embodies his boundless love for Lord Aruḷāḷa to whom he does *prapatti.* He says in the first verse, that even the deep devotion or *Baktiyōga* has failed to give him the salvation. He ran about all directions and finally fell at the feet of Lord Pēraruḷāḷa of Attigiri in Kāñchi, which is the most important among the seven sacred cities. To show the value of the *prapatti-mārga* or the path of surrender, he says that he fell as the famous crow (Kākāsūra) fell at the feet of Rāma.[38] Another verse cites the well-known stories of Vibhīshaṇa, Draupadi, Gajēndra and others who attained salvation by absolute surrender unto God.[39] In another verse, he recommends the study of the Vēdas, the Tamil *prabhandam* of the Āḻvārs and the works of the *Āchāryas* like Rāmānuja to know the greatness of the *prapatti-mārga.*[40] His remarkable mastery of the Sanskrit and Tamil lore is attested by his sumptuous works. He gave discourses on the *Srī-Bāshya* thirty times. One of the important services rendered by Dēsika was his saving of the *Srutaprakāśika*, a commentary on Rāmānuja's *Srī-Bāshya* by Srutaprakāśika Baṭṭar from the chaos that followed the Muslim sack of Srīrangam in A.D. 1328. This is the reason why Vēdānta Dēsika's name is gratefully invoked before the commencement of the study of *Srī-Bāshya* by all the *Srī-Vaishnavas* without any sectarian difference.

Āḻvārs' Tamil *prabhandams* were also dear to him. He pays his tribute to those saints in his *Drāvidopanishad-sāra.* He pays tribute to the *prabhandam*-reciters of Tondaimandalam in one of his poems thus :

"Long live the Brahmins of Tondaimandalam
Long live those who are well-versed in the spotless Tamil Vedas."[41]

The Vaḍakalai version of the *Guruparamparai* mentions that the *Srī-Vaishnavas* of the Tenkalai school were not favourably disposed towards Vēdānta Dēsika and they

boycotted him. But scholars of the Tenkalai school like Sri P.B. Annangarachariar consider this story as nothing but a figment of imagination and that it is not supported by facts.[42] They point out that neither the works of Dēsika nor his contemporaries have any reference to such rivalry. The earliest and the reliable biography of Vēdānta Dēsika is only the *Āchārya Champu* written by an admirer of Dēsika and it does not contain any such story. It does not contain even a hint of any sectarian split in the *Srī-Vaishnava* fold, and much less of any ill-will among sects.[43] Their contention is that there were no Vaḍakalai-Tenkalai sects in the times of Dēsika and that all the *Srī-Vaishnavas* held him in high regard and esteem. In the entire gamut of literature of the Tenkalai teachers, it is pointed out, there is not even a hint of disrespect for Dēsika. On the other hand, it is stated they have paid encomiums to him. Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya has composed a *taniyan*, laudatory verse in praise of Vēdānta Dēsika. Maṇavāḷamuni, in many of his commentaries, quotes many authorities from the works of Vēdānta Dēsika, whom he respectfully calls *"Abhyuktar"*. Subsequent Tenkalai *āchāryas* like Prativāti Bhayankaram Aṇṇan and Doddayāchārya have paid their homage to him.

Anandāḷvān of Mysore, a celebrity of the Tenkalai school who lived in the early part of the 19th century and Kunrapākkam swami, another reputed scholar of the Tenkalai school who lived later, have extolled the greatness of Dēsika and made frequent references to his works in their own writings. The latter respectfully hails him 'Jayati Bhagwān Vēdāntārya-sa-thārkikakēsari' in his work *Tatva-Ratnāvaḷi.* Even on doctrinal matters like *prapatti,* the position of Lakshmi etc., the Tenkalai school claims that Dēsika's writings were in support of their own school. It is further pointed out that because of their continuous *pratibhakti* or devotion to Vēdānta Dēsika, that the Tenkalai school installed his image in almost all the temples under their control and celebrated festivals for him. All these are pointed out to show that Dēsika was equally dear to them and the Vaḍakalai version of any antagonism is anachronistic and fictitious. They point out that Vēdānta Dēsika lived in perfect harmony and amity with his contemporary *āchāryas* who had equal veneration for him. Vēdānta Dēsika has, in his works, paid tributes to the *Srī-Vaishnava* luminaries of the *Prabhandic* school at Srīrangam. It was this abiding love and regard for these *āchāryas* that made Vēdānta Dēsika deeply yearn for his return to Srīrangam, after he had to leave the place during the Muslim attacks on the temple. He gave expression to this intense longing in one of the verses in his famous poem *Abhīdastavam :*

> "Oh Lord ! Let me reside in Srīrangam near
> the great ones who are mutualwell- wishers."[44]

He had great admiration for the *Pūrvāchāryas* like Nampiḷḷai, Peria-vāchān Piḷḷai and Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya from whose works he has drawn inspiration. At several places he has approvingly quoted from the commentaries of Peria Vāchān Piḷḷai whom he endearingly calls as 'āchārya'.[45] From the foregoing discussion it can be inferred that though there were two different schools of thought with regard to some doctrinal matters, there was no mutual rivalry or competition. Indeed, till recently, both the schools were considered complementary to each other—one specialising in exposition of the Sanskrit and the other in the Tamil *prabhandams* for the establishment of the greatness of the *Visishṭādvaitic* philosophy. This state of mutual respect

continued even upto the end of the 18th century A.D. But in the very nature of things, the tenets of the *Prabhandic* school became extremely popular with the vast masses of the people because of the use of the Tamil language and the celebration of the festivals of the Tamil saints and various other reasons which are explained in a later context.

Nāyana Varadāchāriar

Vēdānta Dēsika's son Nāyana Varadāchārya *alias* Kumāra Vēdāntāchārya also lived and studied at Kāñchi. He studied under his own distinguished father and began to give discourses of *Srī-Bāshya.* He wrote a commentary on *Adikaraṇa Sārāvaḷi.* He is considered the last of the Vaḍakalai *āchāryas.* His life period was during the 14th century and with him the pūrvāchārya line among the Vaḍakalais came to a close.

Brahmatantra-Svatantrar

Another disciple of Vēdānta Dēsika was Brahmatantra Svatantra swami who spent his early years at Kāñchi and later settled down at Tirupati. He figures in an epigraph at Varadarājaswāmi temple dated A.D. 1359 as the head of a *maṭha* in Kāñchi.[46] It is said that this *maṭha* was later on shifted to Tirupati and then to Mēlkote (Mysore State) where it later became the famous Parakāla-matha. This is discussed fully elsewhere. Brahmatantra-Svatantrar figures both in the *Srī-Bāshya Guruparamparai* and the *Bhagavat-Vishya parampara.*[47]

Prativāti Bhayankaram Aṇṇan

Kumāra Vēdāntāchārya or Varadāchārya had a disciple—Prativāti Bhayankaram Aṇṇan—who learnt *Srī Bāshyam* under him and then wrote his commentary on it named *Sukapakshīyam,* besides a few more like the commentaries on the *Bhāgavata* and the *Ashtaslōki.* He was one of the leading scholars of the time living at Kāñchi. Then he lived for some time at Srīrangam and wrote his *Saptati Ratnamālika,* the jewel-garland of 70 verses in praise of Vēdānta Dēsika.[48] He later on studied *Thirty-six thousand* commentary (on the Tamil *prabhandam*) under Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni, became one of the latter's eight chief disciples known as *Ashṭadiggajas* appointed for the propagation of the *Prabhanda* creed. He composed many laudatory verses in praise of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni which are regularly recited by the Tenkalai people.

Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni (A.D. 1370-1443)

The life and activities of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni constitute another milestone in the history of *Srī-Vaishnavism.* By his writings as well as his organising genius, he has left indelible impression on a vast majority of *Srī-Vaishnava* devotees.

Maṇavāḷa was born in A.D. 1370 at Ālvār Tirunagari the birth place of Nammāḷvār.[49] He was the disciple of Srīsailēsa *alias* Tiruvāymoḷippiḷḷai, who was in turn the disciple of the great Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya. After leading married life for some time, he became an ascetic and settled down at Srīrangam where he had his maṭha.[50] He was known as the Peria Jīyar.[51] His erudition and dedication to the cause of spreading the message of the Āḷvārs and Rāmānuja won wide recognition. His discourses at Srīrangam temple became popular and the people were delighted

to hear his brilliant exposition of the Āḷvārs' hymns in all their ramifications. Eminent scholars like Kōil Kandādai Aṇṇan, Prativāti Bhayankaram Aṇṇan and Erumbi-appa and ascetics like Vanamāmalai Jīyar became his disciples.

Once he visited Kāñchipuram and stayed there for a year to complete the *Srī-Bāshya* studies under Kidāmbi Nāyanār, a distinguished scholar at Kāñchi. He gave a series of discourses in the temple of Tiruvekha. He worshipped Lord Varadarāja and paid his homage to him by composing his *Dēvarāja-mangaḷam.* It contains 12 Sanskrit verses which describe the divine origin of the deity and the benign qualities of Lord Varadarāja.[52]

Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's chief contribution lies in the popularisation of the Āḷvars' *Divya-prabhandams* and the commentaries thereon like the *Īdu-Thirtysix thousand.* It is said that the latter work was confined to a few private hands and it was he who popularised it. He also added a glossary to it called *Īdu-Pramāṇatiraṭṭu.* He also wrote a series of illuminating commentaries on the esoteric aphorisms of Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya like the *Srī-Vacana-Bhūshana, Tatvattriyam, Rahasytrayam,* Alagia Manavala Nainar's *Āchārya-Hridayam,* Amudanar's *Rāmānuja-Nūṟṟandādi.* In order to popularise the works of his predecessors, he wrote a number of "digests" or *Tiraṭṭu,* like the *Īdu-Pramāṇa-tiraṭṭu, Tatvatraya-pramāṇa-tiraṭṭu* etc. Besides, a full poem on Rāmānuja's greatness, *Yatirāja-Vimasati,* he wrote a short poetic biography of the Āḷvārs and Āchāryas, entitled the *Upadēsa-ratnamālai.*[53] Written in limpid and moving style, this poem has become famous and is recited on important occasions in almost all Vishnu temples, including Varadarāja-swāmi temple. It is a fine poem of 73 stanzas expatiating on the spiritual greatness of the Āḷvārs and their works and the masterly commentaries written by the *Prabhandic āchāryas.* Because of his unparalleled service to the cause of propagation of the liberal doctrines of the Āḷvārs, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni is given a special place of honour in the temples, and his presence and blessings are invoked before the commencement of the recital of the *prabhandams.* Laudatory poems written by his disciples—like the *Varavaramuni-Sadakam* by Erumbiappa, *Yatīndrapravaṇa-prabhāvam* by Piḷḷai Lōkam Jīyar—clearly show that he was held in veneration in his own life-time as an *avatāra* (incarnation) of Rāmānuja.

There is a separate shrine for Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni in the Varadarājaswāmi temple and a regular ten-day annual festival is conducted in the Tamil month of *Aippasi* on his birth asterism.

The popularity of the Prabhandic school and Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's contribution

Thus, from the foregoing account, it can be seen that one line of *āchāryas* or preceptors showed a marked preference to the study and exposition of the *Srī-Bāshya* in the light of the ancient Sanskrit texts, whereas the other line displayed a strong attachment to the study of the Tamil verses of Nammāḷvār and other Āḷvārs. The leaders of the former school were undoubtedly men of great learning and character, recognised by all as the authoritative exponents of the Vedic and the Purānic lore. But the great emphasis they laid on the strict observance of the daily rituals like the *japa, hōma* etc., enjoined by the *Śāstras,* their concentration on the Sanskrit texts and their orthodox and conservative social views inevitably made their tenets more

exclusive. On the other hand, the Southern or the *Prabhandic* school advocated a less ritualistic and more devotional and popular approach to religion. They gave great prominence to the Tamil saints and their inspired hymns which brought them closer to the vast majority of the non-Brahmin community.[54] The festivals they organised for the Tamil saints many of whom were from the lower castes were participated with great enthusiasm by the common folk who lavished endowments for the same. As has been observed by Prof. P.N. Srinivasacharya, "the chief contribution of Tenkalaism to the cause of Srī-Vaishnavism consisted in its democratic dissemination to all people of the truths of the *darsana* confined till then to the higher castes."[55]

Moreover, the Prabhandic school laid greater emphasis on *Kainkarya* or personal service to God in the idol (*archa*) form in the temple as against *karma* or performance of ritualistic duties like *hōma*, *japa* etc. This brought them closer to the temples and their services. To such a popular creed, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's writings and organising genius gave a further impetus. He gave a permanent organisational basis to it by appointing authorised teachers known as *Asṭadiggajas*[56] in different parts of the Srī-Vaishnava world from Mysore to Kanyākumāri. These leaders "made the Prabhandic cult highly prosperous throughout the land. Theird escendants have carried on the torch of learning and teaching. The celebrated monasteries of Vanamāmalai, Tirupati and other places have produced great men of attainments and character who made the tenets of Varavaramuni popular in the courts as well as in the ordinary households.[57] It is no wonder that a vast majority of the Vishnu temples came under their spell. Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple is no exception to this general rule.

Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's deification in the temple

His tenets and teachings were popular at Kāñchi also which led to his deification in the Varadarājaswāmi temple sometime towards the end of the 15th century or the beginning of the 16th century. An inscription dated A.D. 1555 records endowments to various āḷvārs and āchāryas in the temple during their *Tirunakshatram* or birth-star.[58] The list is exhaustive and includes all the twelve āḷvārs and the following āchāryas :

Tirukkachi Nambi	(birth star *Mrigasīrsham*)
Emberumānār	(-do- *Tiruvādirai*)
Kūrattāḷvār	(-do- *Hastam*)
Nāthamuni	(-do- *Anusham*)
Peria Jīyar	(-do- *Mūlam*)

Peria Jīyar was another name for Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni whose birth-star was *Mūlam*. This epigraph clearly shows that Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni was held in high esteem and ranked with great āchāryas like Emberumānār and Nāthamuni, even as early as A.D. 1555. His deification might well have taken place considerably earlier than the date. Another inscription dated Ś 1504 (A.D. 1582) records an endowment for various festivals including the one in honour of Maṇavāḷa-mahāmuni on the birth anniversary falling in the month of *Arpasi* (*Manavāḷa-mahāmuni-arppasi-mūla Sirappu*).[59]

A copper-plate grant dated A.D. 1724 records endowment of villages for various charities in the temple including the feeding of devotees in the shrine of Peria Jīyar during the annual festival (*Peria Jīyar Sannidiyil Nadakkira Nitya tariyārādanai*).[60]

The deification of Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni and continuous endowments for the celebra-

tions of his birth-day and the conspicuous absence of mention of any of the *āchāryas* of the Vaḍakalai school in any of the inscrptions of this temple may perhaps go to show the growing influence of the Prabhandic school in this temple. [61]

Section 3

THE POST-MANAVĀLA MAHĀMUNI PERIOD (A.D. 1440 TO THE END OF THE 18TH CENTURY)

With Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni we come to the end of the line of *Pūrvāchāryas*. From this period onwards i.e., from the middle of the 15th century A.D., the history of *Srī-Vaishnavas* has to be reckoned by reviewing the services of a number of distinguished *Āchārya-purushas* and other Vaishnava leaders. Another important development was the great spurt in the activities of the Jīyars or ascetics, many of whom were appointed to look after the proper conduct of worship in the temples. A number of seminaries or *maṭhas* like the Aḷagiya-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar-maṭha, Van-Saṭagōpa-maṭha and the Vānamāmalai-maṭha gave an organised lead to the *Srī-Vaishnavas* and ministered to their religious needs. Besides these, there were a number of local *maṭhas*. In Kāñchi too, there were a few *maṭhas* attached to Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple mainly for the propagation of *Rāmānuja-darsana*. The work of the *maṭhas* will be reviewed in a later context. We will now refer to the various *Srī-Vaishnava* leaders associated with this temple from about the 15th century A.D. This period, it is worthy to note, was specially conducive to the growth of Vaishnavism because of the ardent enthusiasm and patronage of the Vijayanagar kings, who were devoted Vaishnavas. Though helpful and symathetic to all other religions, they developed special affinity to Vaishnavism and extended their patronage to the Vaishnava-*āchāryas* and institutions on a large scale. The Vijayanagar kings and nobles vied with one another in extending their patronage on a lavish scale to the Srī-Vaishnavism and their institutions. For Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, it was indeed a prosperous period, as it received enormous gifts by way of land, money, jewels, vehicles (*vāhanas*) etc. Many of its elegant structures like the beautiful *Kalyāṇa maṇḍapa*, the *Kalyāṇakōṭi vimāna*, the eastern *gōpura*, the *vāhana-maṇḍapa*, the *ūñjal-maṇḍapa*, the *Tulā-bhāra-maṇḍapa* etc., were constructed during this period. Another notable development is the enormous increase in the celebration of festivals not only for the main deity but also for all the Āḻvārs and *āchāryas*. Offerings in honour of Tirukkachi Nambi, Kūrattāḻvār, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni are frequently referred to in the epigraphs of the 16th century. In short, it can be called a golden age for *Srī-Vaishnavism* and also for our temple.

Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar

The most prominent Jīyar at Kāñchi in the post-Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni period was Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar. Several inscriptions datable to the latter half of the 15th century and the earlier half of the 16th century, speak of his services to the temple and his eminent position in the temple affairs at Kāñchi. His life period was from A.D. 1420 to 1468. It was already pointed out that during this period there was a great spurt in the activities of the Jīyars whose main function was to look after the proper conduct of worship and festivals in the temple and to administer certain endowments

and see that they were utilised for the purposes for which they were meant. Thus, the Tirupati inscriptions as well as the *Tirumalai-olugu* speak of the eminence of Vaḍa-Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar, the *Kōil-kēḷvi* of the temple. According to the *Tirumalai-olugu*[63] Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni appointed his disciple Srīranga Nārāyana Jīyar as the superintendent of the Srīrangam temple and Vaḍa Tiruvēngaḍam Jīyar as the *Kōil-kēḷvi* of the Tirupati temple. Inscriptions at Tirupati refer to successive Vaḍa-Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyars. Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar seems to have held a similar position at Kāñchi from the last decade of the 15th century.

He was the disciple of Paṭṭarpirān Jīyar, one of the *ashṭadiggajas* of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni.[64] It is interesting to note that Maṇavāḷa was similarly known as Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar. Thus, the affinity of Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar of Kāñchi to Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni is beyond doubt. An interesting inscription of the latter half of the 15th century at Tirupati records the offerings to Lord on the birth-star of these two ascetics (*sanyāsis*) famed as 'the beautiful' as both were called Aḷagia-maṇavāḷar.[65] The Sanskrit names of the two ascetics were Ramya-jāmātru-muni (Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni) and Saumya-jāmātru-muni—both meaning 'the beautiful'. Aḷagia-manavāla-Jīyar and his disciple Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār played a notable part in the development of the temple. Both were contemporaries of the Vijayanagar king Sāḷuva Narasimha who was a great devotee of Vēnkatēśvara of Tirumalai. Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār was held in high esteem by Sāḷuva Narasimha. From Tirupati inscriptions, we know that Narasimha appointed Rāmānuja Ayyangār as the manager of the feeding houses or *Rāmānuja-kūṭas* at Tirupati and also at Kāñchi. His activities at Kāñchi are also well attested by the inscriptions (dating from A.D. 1487) found at the Varadarāja temple which will be reviewed later. What is to be noted here is, that he is frequently referred to as the disciple of Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa Jīyar of Kāñchi. The earliest reference to the Jīyar is found in Tirupati inscription dated Ś 1388 (A.D. 1466) and another in Ś 1391 (A.D. 1469).[66] Both of them refer to him as a famous personality at Kāñchi and the preceptor of Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār. Another inscription of Tirupati dated A.D. 1535 records the institution of offerings by Vaḍa-Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar (the *Kōil-kēḷvi* at Tirupati) in honour of his *āchārya* (preceptor) Tiruvāymoḷi-perumāḷ Nāyanār and Paramāchārya (preceptor of preceptors) Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar, whose birth star was *aśvini* in the month of *Āni*.[67] From this epigraph we can infer that Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar was of advanced age or had already passed away.

The next Jīyar in succession, who was also called Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar, figures very prominently in the Kāñchi inscriptions dating from A.D. 1553 to A.D. 1562, during the time of Sadāśiva Rāya. In some of them, he is designated as *Srī-kāryam* or manager of the temple and in others as *Kōil-kēḷvi* or the superintendent of the temple. Two inscriptions dated A.D. 1558 and 1562 refer to Aḷagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar's gift of four villages to meet the expenses for various offerings including a ten-day festival for Tonḍaraḍippoḍi Āḷvār in the month of *Tai*[68] and *tiruvadyayana-utsavam* for Sūḍikkoḍutha-nāchiyār (Āṇḍāl). He also made provision for offerings to Lord Varadarāja when he visited Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-peruntōppu (garden named after the Jīyar) in the Tamil months of *Āḍi, Āvaṇi, Puraṭṭāsi, Kārttigai, Māsi* and *Vaikāśi*. In A.D. 1560, Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa Jīyar the superintendent of the temple (*kōil-kēḷvi*) gifted some lands to the temple, the income from which had to be utilised for making elaborate provi-

sions and offerings for festivals of Tiruppān Āḻvār and Alagia Singar (Narasimha). The village was named Poigaippākkam *alias* Aḻagia Maṇavāḷapuram—named after the Jīyar again.[69]

The same Jīyar was responsible for many constructional activities in the temple. According to the *Vaibhavaprakāśika* of the Aḻagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar *maṭha* at Kāñchi, the Jīyar built the *maṇḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine, the western annexe to the *Abhishēka-maṇḍapa*, the hundred-pillared *Kalyāṇa maṇḍapa* and reconstructed the compound wall of the third *prākāra*. It also says that he caused his own statue to be carved in those structures.[70] This version is remarkably borne out by the presence of the sculpture of the Jīyar in those buildings. In the *maṇḍapa* in front of Tāyār shrine, his sculpture is found on the second pillar in the front row facing north. He is depicted in standing pose with his *antarīya* flowing right upto the ankle and a cloth tied on the waist and having a *tridaṇḍa* in his hand. He wears a clear Tenkalai mark on his forehead. An exactly similar figure is found in a niche at the top of the compound wall of the fourth *prākāra* on the north and east sides of the main shrine. Aḻagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar's figure, with his typical dress of a Jīyar, is found in two places at the Kalyāṇa maṇḍapa. Both are shown in seated postures holding the *tridaṇḍa* and bearing the Tenkalai mark. It is pointed out that wearing the *antarīya* upto the ankle and tying another cloth on the waist, are typical characteristics of the Jīyars of the Tenkalai school, whereas the Jīyars of the Vaḍakalai sect wear the lower cloth only upto the knee and have the other piece of cloth near the arm-pit.

Perhaps, the same Aḻagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar figures in two Sanskrit inscriptions found at Vilakkoḷiperumāḷ temple at Kāñchi itself. Both are undated records which refer to the construction of a certain *maṇḍapa* and the *prākāra* walls in that temple by one Sankaradāsa, a disciple of Aḻagia-maṇavāḷa Jīyar. The Jīyar is eulogised in the inscription as one who was well-versed in the Ubhaya-Vēdānta (Sanskrit and Tamil lore), deeply immersed in the philosophy of *Srī Bāshya* and a veritable ornament of Kāñchi.[71]

Further history of the successors of this Aḻagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar and the *maṭha* over which they presided will be pursued in a later context.

Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyan

We know from the Tirupati inscriptions that one Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyan, who was probably a Sāttāda-*Srī-Vaishnava*, was held in high esteem by the Vijayanagar king, Sāḷuva Narasimha. Rāmānuja Ayyan or Ayyangār's life-period was from 1430 to 1496. The king appointed him as the *kartār* or the guardian of the gold treasury (*Porpandāram*) of the temple at Tirupati.[72] Rāmānuja Ayyan was undoubtedly an influential person who was instrumental in getting numerous grants from the king to the Tirupati temple and particularly for the celebration of festivals for Āḻvārs and *āchāryas*.[73] He also made many salutary reforms in that temple. He was appointed the manager of the feeding houses or *Rāmānujakūṭams* at Tirupati and probably elsewhere also. From the inscriptions at Srīrangam we learn that he and his successors were in charge of the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* there also.[74] A record of Sāḷuva Narasimha dated Ś 1409 (A.D. 1487) informs us that this Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyan was in charge of the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* at Kāñchi. It records a gift of money to Virūpāksha-danāyaka a chieftain of Sāḷuva Narasimha for the reconstruction ceremony of the image

of Perundēvi Tāyār in the temple and for laying out groves in the temple-lands etc. He ordered that from produce of the lands certain offerings should be given to the deities and one fourth of the offerings should be given to the 'Kandāḍai-Rāmānuja-Ayyangār Rāmānujakūṭa' in the Sannidhi Street.[75] This epigraph clearly shows that Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-ayyangār was in charge of the Rāmānuja-kūta situated at the Sannidhi Street at Kāñchi also as early as A.D. 1487. His connection with Kāñchi need not surprise us for the Tirupati inscriptions frequently refer to him as the disciple of Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar of Kāñchi.[76]

After his discipleship under Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar at Kāñchi in his early years, he went on pilgrimage to all the shrines of the south. He observed in detail how the temple worship and various festivals were carried on in the famous temples like Srīrangam where he did some notable service. His services at Srīrangam and Kāñchipuram are mentioned in an incomplete tablet on the east wall of the Pādikāval *gōpuram* in Tirumalai.[77] He won the respect and esteem of Sāḷuva Narasimha who appointed him as the *kartār* or manager of all the *Rāmānuja-kūṭas*. His reforms, at Tirumalai are recorded in the inscriptions there.[78] Particularly, he did much to popularise the festivals connected with the Āḻvārs (like the *Tiruvadyayana festival, Tiruvāymoḻi-sirappu*) and Rāmānuja there. He gave prominence to the *prabhandam*-recital and associated even the Sāttāda-Vaishnavas in it.[79] The intimate association of Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār and his disciples with the Srīrangam temple is attested not only by the Srīrangam inscription but also the *kōil-oḻugu*.[80] It eulogises his benefactions to the temple. He is said to have obtained the *dāsya-nāma* Kandāḍai Rāmānujadāsan at the hands of kōil-Kandāḍai Aṇṇa, one of the eight chief disciples of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni. He doned the robes of Ekāngi and was in charge of the various branches of the temple organisation.[81]

Successive members of this family were in charge of the *Rāmānuja-kūṭas* at Kāñchi as at Tirupati and Srīrangam.[82] An epigraph dated A.D. 1512 (in Krishnadēva Rāya's time) records an endowment by a member of the Cheṭṭiār community for offerings for Tirukkachi-nambi in the name of the donor's *āchārya* (preceptor) Kandāḍai-ayyangār.[83] An inscription dated A.D. 1530 records an endowment of 2,600 gold coins by Kandāḍai-Rāmānuja-ayyangār, the *dharmakartha* of the charities of *Rāmānuja-kūṭam* in the Sannidhi Street.[84] It was to be utilised for various festivals, processions and offerings to Pēraruḷāḷa and Mahālakshmi. The next record dated A.D. 1537 registers a royal gift in honour of Tirumala Rāya, the nephew of the king Achyutarāya. The donated money of 300 *pon* was entrusted to Kandāḍai-Rāmānuja-ayyangār of the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa*, who had to conduct the various festivals which included the *Tiruvadyayana*-festival for the Āḻvārs and offerings on the day of the birth-asterism (*Tai-chitra*) of Kandāḍai-Rāmānuja-ayyangār.[85] This epigraph clearly shows Kandāḍai Rāmānuja was held in high esteem and trust by the Vijayanagar kings. Next year i.e., A.D. 1538 Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-ayyangār is specifically mentioned as the manager (*Srī-kāryam*) of the temple in an epigraph which records the grant of Vaḍa Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar, the *kōil-kēḻvi* at Tirupati. The grant was for the *Tiruvadyayana*-festival in the month of *mārgaḻi*. It gives the shares for the *prabhanda*-reciters of the Brahmin community. From this epigraph we also understand that importance was given to the Sāttāda-Vaishnavas or non-Brahmin devotees in the temple. One of the shares of the *prasādam* was to go to the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa*.[86]

Another epigraph of the Vijayanagar times, the exact year of which is however not given, records that one Kandāḍai Annanāyyangār evidently a member of the same Kandāḍai family conducted certain festivals during which the *Tiruppallāṇḍu*-hymns of Periāḷvār were recited. The grant was made by royal officer Rāyasam Timmakkan.[87]

The foregoing instances go to show that the descendants of Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-ayyangār were highly respected by the kings and common folk alike. Particularly, they had numerous Sāttāda Vaishnavas as disciples who lavished endowments both at Tirupati and Kāñchi. Another noteworthy point is that they paid particular care to create endowments for the celebrations of the festivals in honour of the āḻvārs and the *āchāryas* like Tirukkachi-nambi and also for maintaining the due shares for the *prabhandam*-reciters who are frequently mentioned in their inscriptions. They showed special patronage to the festivals of the Āḻvārs. Their services to the temples at Srīrangam and Tirupati are eulogised in the *kōil-o'ugu*. All these factors together with the discipleship of the first Kandāḍai Rāmānuja to Alagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar at Kāñchi and his devotion to *kōil*-Kandāḍai Aṇṇan of Srīrangam, one of the eight chief disciples of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni—all clearly show their affiliation to the *Prabhandic* school.[88] It was already shown that Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni was deified in this temple sometime earlier than A.D. 1555. Probably, it was done during the time of the first Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-ayyangār, the powerful lieutenant of Sāḷuva Narasimha.

Van-Saṭagōpa Jīyar

One of the influential *maṭhas* of the second half of the 15th-16th century whos presiding Jīyars did yeoman service in the cause of *Srī-Vaishnavism*, was the Van-Saṭagōpa *maṭham*, later known as Ahōbila-*maṭha*. Ādi Van Saṭagōpa Jīyar, the founder of the *maṭha*, was the *guru* of Allasāni Peddannā, the poet-laureate of the Vijayanagar monarch Krishnadēva Rāya. The Jīyar is eulogised as the "asylum of all learning" by Peddannā in his *Manucharitamu*.[89] The king himself in his *Amuktamālyadā* praises Van Saṭagōpa's efforts to popularise Srī-Vaishnavism in the Āndhra country.[90] The date of birth given to the Jīyar in the *Sannidhi guruparampara* has been found to be antedated by 60 years. Calculating from the epigraphical data available at Kāñchi and Tirupati, it has been shown that Van Saṭagōpa Jīyar was born in A.D. 1437 and lived upto A.D. 1516. His pontificate for sixty years should have continued until the beginning years of Krishnadēva Rāya.[91] At Varadarājaswāmi temple a record dated Ś 1431 or A.D. 1509 mentions the gift of a land in a village named Van-Satagōpapuram evidently after the Jīyar.[92]

He is said to have been a native of Mēlkōte near Mysore. He spent his early years at Kāñchi and pursued studies under a well-known scholar Ghaṭikāstanam-ammāḷ *alias* Varadakavi. After leading married life for some time, he proceeded to Ahōbilam (in Kurnool District in Āndhra Pradesh) and is believed to have received initiation into Sanyāsa-āśrama (ascetic life) at the hands of God Narasimha.

According to the Tenkalai tradition, Van Saṭagōpa Jīyar was devoted to Manavāḷa Mahāmuni for whom he built a shrine at Mēlkōte.[93]

Ādi Van-Saṭagōpa was succeeded first by Srīman Nārāyaṇa Jīyar and next by Parānkuśa Jīyar I. The former occupied the *gadi* from A.D. 1515 to 1528, and the

latter from A.D. 1528 to 1541.[94] Nārāyaṇa Jīyar lived almost to the end of Krishnadēva Rāya's reign while his successor Parānkuśa Jīyar was a contemporary of Krishnadēva and Achyuta Rāya. There are two records at Varadarājaswāmi temple, Kāñchi, dated Ś 1452 and Ś 1461 corresponding respectively to A.D. 1530 and 1539 which mention the Parānkuśa Jīyar's offering to this temple during auspicious occasions like the Chaturmāsa-Ekādaśi days and on the Kauśikadvādaśi days.[95] He also made provision for reading the *Kauśika purāṇa* on the Kauśikadvādaśi days. Three villages in Dāmarkōṭṭam were donated by him for meeting the expenses of 15 *Ekādaśi* days. The items of expenditure included the presentation of cloth to one who recited the *Kauśika-purāṇa.*

These instances clearly show that the Jīyars of the Van-Saṭagōpa *maṭha* took keen interest in fostering the religious faith and observances in many Vaishnava temples of South India.

Paravastu and Nallān Chakravarti families

In Achyutarāya's inscriptions of the temple several members of the Srī-Vaishnava families are mentioned. A record dated Ś 1460 (A.D. 1538) mentions a gift to this temple by Vaḍa Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar the *kōil-kēḷvi* or the temple-superintendent at Tirumalai and disciple of Paravastu Naynār Ayyangār.[96] Another epigraph of the same king records a gift by a member of the well-known *Āchārya-purusha* family, Nallān Chakravarti. He made a gift of 1,200 *pon* (gold) to the temple, out of which 150 *pon* should be granted to Gōvinda Ayyangār, the son of his preceptor Nallān Chakravarti Srīranga Ayyangār. The latter was given one eighth of the offerings.[97]

Tallāpākkam family

The members of this family were renowned musicians and poets who composed hundreds of devotional songs set to music and sang them regularly in the presence of Lord Venkaṭēśvara of Tirumalai. They were Nandavarika Brahmanas and belonged to the Bharadwāja-gōtra. Annamāchārya or Sankīrtanāchārya, the well-known Telugu poet and musical-composer, was the earliest member of this family. He lived during the reigns of Sāḷuva Narasimha and Krishnadēva Rāya. He was first a Smārtha and later became a staunch adherent of Rāmānuja-siddānta. His son Pedda or Peria Tirumala-ayyangār, grandson Siru or Chinna Tirumala-ayyangār and his great grandson Tiruvēngalappar figure in the inscriptions of our temple as donors. The epigraphs at Tirupati testify to their prosperity and also their liberal benefactions to the temple there.[98] Here in our records too, their donations are recorded. Thus, an epigraph dated Ś 1474 (A.D. 1553) records that Pedda Tirumala-ayyangār and his son together provided for offerings for God Aruḷāḷa and arranged for conducting certain festivals at specified scales of expenditure.[99] Pedda Tirumala ayyangār was a profound scholar and philosopher. His son Chinna Tirumala ayyangār was also a prolific composer, whose works include *Adhyātma-sankīrtana-Lakshanam.* His various other benefactions to Gōvindarāja temple at Tirupati and the temple at Tiruchānūr are recorded in the inscriptions of those places.[100]

Another member of the Tallāpākkam family of poets was Chinna-Tirumala ayyangār's son Tiruvēngalappār. In Ś 1475 (A.D. 1553) he donated the income from two villages to the Varadarājaswāmi temple to be utilised for certain offerings

on festival days.[101] He wrote a commentary in Telugu called *Bālaprabōdini* or *Amara*. In the preface to this work, he traces his descent from Tallāpākkam Annamāchārya.

The Kāñchi records clearly show that the beneficial hand of the Tallāpākkam family extended even upto Kāñchi.

Anandām Piḷḷai

An epigraph dated A.D. 1535 records an endowment for the festival of Tirukkachi-nambi and stipulates certain shares in the *prasādam* for the preceptors like Anandām Piḷḷai Iyengār and the Srī-Vaishnavas reciting the *Prabhandas*.[102] The members of Anandām Piḷḷai family are found still in Kāñchipuram and other places and they are staunch exponents of the Prabhandic or Tenkalai school. It is interesting to recall here that another member of the Anandām Piḷḷai family residing at Tirumalai donated (in A.D. 1545) a large sum of money to the temples of Tirumalai and Tirupati for offerings during the time when the "*kaṇṇinum-Siruttāmbu*" verses in praise of Nammāḻvār were sung in the annual *Adyayanōtsavam* festival.[103]

Parakāla Aḻagia Śingar

There is an interesting record dated Ś 1477 (A.D. 1555) which mentions an endowment made by Parakāla Aḻagia Śingar of Tirunārāyaṇapuram, son of Mudumbai Appiḷḷai Annāvaiyyangār.[104] He was probably the head of the Parakāla *maṭha* of Tirunārāyanapuram or Mēlkōte. His father was a native of Mudumbai village to which the great Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya also belonged. Here in this record Parakāla Aḻagia Śingar made sumptuous gift of lands for meeting the expenses for offerings for all the Āḻvārs and some *āchārya-purushas* on their respective asterism. The *āchāryas* mentioned are: Nāthamuni, Emberumānār (Ramānuja), Kūrattālvār, Tirukkachi-nambi and Peria-Jīyar or Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni (*Mūlam* star). The birth-star of Parakāla Jīyar (star *Uttiram*) either himself or one of his predessors is also included.

Tātāchārya family

Another famous Srī-Vaishnava family was that of the Tātāchāryas. According to the Sanskrit work *Prapannāmrutam* written by Anantāchārya, a disciple of Tātāchārya, the Tātāchāryas were the descendants of the Srī Sailanātha or Tirumalai-nambi, the uncle and teacher of Rāmānuja. Two of the early members of this family who were proficient in the exposition of the Rāmāyaṇa are said to have migrated from Tirupati to Eṭṭūr and from there to Hampi, the capital of the Vijayanagar. They were highly respected by the Vijayanagar monarchs. One of the descendants of this family was the famous Pañchamatabhañjanam Tātāchārya who lived in the court of Rāmarāya I and contemporary of Mahāchārya or Doḍḍayāchārya. Both Doḍḍayāchārya and Tātāchārya defended the tenets of the Visishṭādvaita philosophy and refuted the criticisms of Appayya Dīkshitar, the well-known Advaitic scholar of the times. Doḍḍayāchārya who lived at Sōḻasimhapuram (about 45 miles from Kāñchi on the way to Tirupati) wrote his famous work *Chanḍamārutam* while Tātāchārya wrote the work *Pañchamatabhañjanam*. Both these Srī-Vaishnava leaders are said to have played a notable part in reinstalling the image of Gōvindarāja at Chidam-

baram.[105]

Till the disastrous battle of 1565, the members of the Tātāchārya family lived in the vicinity of Vijayanagar. But after that, they went to different places.[106] The Vijayanagar capital was for some time at Penugoṇḍa and later shifted to Chandragiri by Srīranga I whose rule commenced in A.D. 1572. It is during this time of Srīranga I that one branch of the Tātāchārya family settled down at Kāñchi. The earliest epigraph at Kāñchi mentioning Tātāchārya is dated Ś 1496 (A.D. 1574).[107] He was Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tirumalai Tātāchārya, who became the best known member of the family later on.[108] The place-names like Eṭṭūr and Tirumalai prefixed to his name showed his original homes from where his family first hailed. In this epigraph he is mentioned in connection with the sale of certain services like the conduct of *Tiruvadyayana* festival in the Tamil month of *mārgaḷi*, *Srī Jayanti* and other minor festivals. But Tātāchārya's position in the temple is not mentioned in this inscription. However, the next epigraph dated A.D. 1582 mentions him as *Srī-kārya-Durantara* or manager-general of the temple.[109] This is an important inscription as it gives us information about the various Ālvārs and *āchāryas* for whom therew ere shrines in the temple, and the various festivals conducted in their honour. It records an agreement by the *Srī Baṇḍārattār* (treasurer) of the temple and Tātāchārya-ayyan with the military commander (*Daḷavāy*) of the Vijayanagar king to provide offerings and worship to Pēraruḷāḷar, Perundēviyār (Goddess), Sērakulavalli-nāchchiār, all the āḷvārs and some *āchāryas*. The *āchāryas* mentioned are Emberumānār (Rāmānuja), Nāthamuni and Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni. The specific mention of Tātāchārya's agreement to perform the Janma-nakshatiram of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni on his annual birthday is indeed significant as it shows his devotion to this *āchārya*. In another record dated A.D. 1583 it is mentioned that he was the *āchārya* of Tirumalai, Kumbakōṇam and Tirumālirumsōlai and that he performed *Vājapēya yāga* at the temple.[110] In the same year i.e., A.D. 1583 he donated one village for conducting festivals, *Tiruvadyayana* festival in the month of *mārgaḷi*, *Tiruppavitra-utsavam* festival for Āṇḍāḷ etc. (586 of 1919). Eṭṭūr Tirumalai Kumāra Tātāchārya continued to hold an eminent position as royal preceptor under Srīranga's successor Vēnkaṭa II, who succeeded to the throne in A.D. 1586. The Tātāchārya is said to have officiated as the royal *guru* during his coronation. There are a number of inscriptions of Vēnkaṭa II at Varadarājaswāmi temple and elsewhere, reciting the benefactions and other acts of Kumāra Tātāchārya. Their dates range between A.D. 1587 and 1614, till almost the end of Vēnkaṭa's reign. He is stated to have weighed himself against gold and silver and to have used that wealth in the service of Varadarāja in erecting the *Kalyāṇa-kōṭi vimāna* for goddess Lakshmi.[111] The Tāyār shrine was already there (as has already been shown) but the tower was rebuilt and covered with gold-coated plate. He built it in emulation of the *Punyakōṭi-vimāna* set up by Krishnadēva Rāya Tātāchārya repaired and re-gilt with gold as it got defaced in the course of a century. His benefactions include many *vāhanas* or processional vehicles and some jewels.[112] He also dug a tank at Kāñchi named Tātāsamudram (now known as Ayyankulam) and built a shrine on its bank for Hanuman. He composed a poem of 20 verses named *Hanumadvimsati* which is now inscribed on the east and north walls of the rock and also on the outermost *gōpuram*, right of the entrance at Varadarājaswāmi temple.[113] It should be remembered that Hanuman was a favourite God of the

Vijayanagar kings. In an inscription found at the Hanuman temple at Ayyankuḷam, it is stated that the consecration ceremony was celebrated in a grand manner and king Venkaṭa was present at Kāñchi to witness the same.[114] His assistants or agents Visva Punḍitar and Tiruppaṇi Piḷḷai of Tiruppullāṇi are also mentioned. But two of the inscriptions give us the information that Tātāchārya was not the sole manager of this temple. While the inscription dated A.D. 1591 mentions him as one of the managers,[115] the other dated earlier i.e., A.D. 1588, specifically mentions Sannidhi Srīrāma Ayyangār as another *Srī-kāryam* or manager.[116] The position appears to be like this. Each temple had its own traditional local *Srī-kāryam* or manager. Tātāchārya was evidently appointed as the *Srī-kārya-durantara* or manager-general of many Vishnu temples not only in Kāñchi but also at Srīperumbūdūr, Tirunirmalai etc., probably to have an overall supervision in their affairs.[117] Hence, in his inscriptions we get the names of a number of agents and local managers under him. But, the last that we hear of Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchāri at Kāñchi is A.D. 1614, the last year of his patron Venkaṭa II. Practically, that marks the end of Tātāchārya's administration. His son Eṭṭūr Immaḍi Kumāra Tirumalai Tātāchārya figures in an inscription at Srīperumbūdūr which is dated in A.D. 1634, as the manager of that temple. He also figures in two inscriptions at Tennēri (15 miles from Kāñchi) where he built a sluice for the tank. There also he is called Eṭṭūr Immaḍi Kumāra Tirumalai Tātāchārya. He personally laid the foundation of this first sluice. But, strangely the junior Tātāchārya does not figure in the inscriptions of our temple. It was the time when the Vijayanagar power was rapidly declining. Soon after the death of Venkaṭa II in 1614, there was a bitter civil war in which the rightful nominee Srīranga was put to death by the rebel group. The empire was parcelled into many governorships and the Vijayanagar kingdom lost its supremacy and influence. In 1645, the combined forces of Bijapur and Gōlkonḍa laid siege to Vellore the capital and seized it. That was practically the death-knell of the Vijayanagar empire. With its decline, the Tātāchāryas were also losing their royal backing and patronage. The inscriptions at Kāñchi are silent about their activities. In this turbulent period the only strong Hindu kingdom which looked like stepping into the shoes of the Vijayanagar kingdom was that of the Mysore Woḍeyārs, who were strong Vaishnavas. So, the Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya family moved to Srīrangapaṭna, the capital of the Mysore kings, in search of better fortunes. This is clearly borne out by an inscription found in Mysore from which we learn that Venkaṭa-Varadāchārya of Yēḍūr (i.e., Eṭṭūr), grandson of Immaḍi-Tirumala-Tātāchārya and son of Kōṭi-Kanyādānam-Lakshmi-Kumāra Tātāchārya proceeded to the court of Srīrangapaṭṭinam as the preceptor of Dēvarāya Woḍeyār, the king of Mysore. He reached Mysore in A.D. 1663.[118] As Hayavadana Rao says :[119]

> "The arrival of the celebrated Tātāchārya family of Srī-Vaishnavite royal preceptors from the court of Vijayanagar and their settlement in Srīrangapatnam probably contributed not a little to confirm in the Royal House of Mysore the vanishing glories of the Vijayanagar imperialism."

Vēnkaṭādri and Gōmaṭam family (A.D. 1658-59)

When Kāñchi was in the grip of Muslim inroads, the temple was ably managed by one Vēnkaṭādri, an agent of the Vijayanagar king. This is attested by an epigraph

dated A.D. 1658-59 (Ś 1581). It records the conferring of privileges like *Parivaṭṭam* (holy turban), *Tīrtham* (holy water) and Saṭagōpam (the placing of the sacred feet of the Lord on one's head) on Vēnkaṭādri, who administered the temple ably during the Muslim disturbances.[120] In 1684, Vēnkaṭādri transferred the honours as privileges to his preceptor or *āchārya* of the Gōmaṭam Tirumalāchārya family, a Srī-Vaishnava belonging to the Tenkalai school.[121] The descendants of this family continue to enjoy the privileges even today.

Aruḷappāḍu rights for Prativāti Bhayankaram family (A.D. 1677 and 1687)

The other Srī-Vaishnava leaders of the times who were presented with certain honours like the *Aruḷappāḍu* and holy water (*Tīrtham*), all belonged to the Tenkalai school. *Aruḷappāḍu* right holders were also the *Stalattārs* of the temple. Thus, in A.D. 1677 (Ś 1599) the *Aruḷappāḍu* rights and privileges were conferred on one Srīrangāchārya, son of Vādibhīkara Srīnivāsa Guru of *Srī-vatsa-gōtra*. He belonged to the Prativāti Bhayankaram family.[122]

The next inscription dated Ś 1609 (A.D. 1687) confers[123] the privileges like the first *Tīrtham* and *Aruḷappāḍu* on Govindāchārya son of Prativāti Bhayankaram Rangāchārya of *Srī-vatsa-gōtra. First Tīrtham* means precedence in honours during the distribution of the consecrated water and food. It is interesting to note that the representatives of this family still-enjoy this *Aruḷappāḍu* right though the *'first tīrtham'* honour has lapsed, due to various reasons. The Prativāti Bhayankaram family, as pointed out earlier, is one of the distinguished families of preceptors, who have played an important role in the dissemination of the Srī-Vaishnava tenets in various places such as Tirupati, Kāñchi etc.

Āttān Jīyar

In 1688, Aurangazeb's expedition into the South took place and Kāñchipuram, in common with several other important centres of South India, felt the shock of the invading army. It was the time when the temple authorities fearing desecration, disguised the images of Lord Varadarāja and His consorts and conveyed them out of Kāñchi city. These images found their asylum in the jungles of Uḍayārpāḷayam. After nearly 22 years, when Kāñchipuram was considered safe, the temple authorities wanted to bring back the images to the temple. But the local chieftain at Uḍayārpāḷayam refused to part with them. At the special intercession of Srīmat-Parmahamsa Parivrājakāchārya Āttān Tiruvēnkaḍa Rāmānuja Jīyar, his disciple and chieftain Lāla Tōḍarmallā used force and brought back the images safely and reinstalled them in their original abode—Kāñchi. This took place in Ś 1632 (A.D. 1710) as is attested by a long inscription found in a slab erected prominently near the Tāyār shrine.[124] The slab bears a clear and bold Tenkalai caste-mark (mutilated and later restored under court orders) flanked by *Śankha* and *Chakra* showing, incidentally, that it was the recognised mark of the temple at that time (Fig. 3). In recognition of the yeoman services rendered to this temple by Rāja Tōdarmāl, those who were in the authority of the temple known as the *Stalattārs* conferred the right of management of the temple on Tōḍarmallā, who in his turn, transferred it to his *guru* Āttān Jīyar. Āttān Jīyar[125] was a Ṣrī-Vaishnava of Tenkalai sect and he was

managing the temple till his death in 1723. Then Rāja Tōdarmāl re-conferred the title of full proprietorship (*Sarva-Srī-Kārya-Durantaratvam*) on Āttān Jīyar's son (born before he became a Sanyasin) by name Rāmānuja Rayanivāru which was to be enjoyed hereditarily also. Thus, the descendants of Āttān Jīyar were holding the office of trusteeship for nearly four generations till 1794. In 1794, the Government took over the administration of the temple.

The Tenkalai preponderance in the temple is again confirmed by another record of A.D. 1713 which registers that the *Stalattārs* of the temple conferred the *Aruḷa-ppāḍu Tīrtham* honours on one Srīrangam Nallān Chakravarti. This family is still enjoying this right in this temple and its members belong to the Tenkalai school.

Return of Tātāchārya family to Kāñchi (A.D. 1711)

In A.D. 1711 a year after the restoration, the descendant of the Eṭṭūr Tirumalai Kumāra Tātāchārya returned to Kāñchi from Mysore. At the instance of Āttān Jīyar and Tōḍarmallā, the Tātāchārya was made to receive priority of honours (*Agra-tāmbōōlam*) in the temple, in view of the past eminent position of the family as the royal priests of the Vijayanagar kings. But this was done on the definite undertaking given by the Tātāchārya that he would honour the Tenkalai traditions (*māmūl*) of the temple and that he would honour the Tenkalai Āchārya, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni and that he would chant the *tanian* or invocatory verses (*Srisailēsa Dayā Pātram*) in honour of the *āchārya* in the temple as it was done in all the eighteen sacred Vishnu temples of Kāñchi. This famous agreement known as the Āttān Jīyar agreement was signed by Eṭṭūr Immaḍi Lakshmi Kumāra Tātāchārya and delivered to Āttān Jīyar.[126] We do not know why such a strong undertaking was felt necessary. Was it because the Tenkalai *Stalattārs* feared that the Tātāchārya would introduce innovation contrary to the established customs of the temple ? Whatever it is, this document clearly shows that the Tenkalai mode of ceremonies and worship prevailed in the temple.

Except for some stray occasions when a deviation was sought to be made (as in A.D. 1770),[127] the major part of the 18th century was characterised by peace and concord. The Tenkalai procedure of worship, ceremonies and *mantras* prevailed in the temple as they did in the seventeen other Vishnu temples of Kāñchi. The Tātāchāryas accepted to respect the prevailing customs. But from the beginning of the 19th century, we witness the sectarian disputes coming into sharp focus, which often tended to mar the religious atmosphere.

Vaishnava sect-marks

A word about the external symbols of the temples. It is well-known that two types of *ūrdhvapunḍra* or sacred perpendicular marks are worn by the Srī-Vaishnavas on their forehead. They consist of three vertical streaks, the middle one being red, or yellow, and the other two, white in colour. Various interpretations are given for their significance and they are considered to be the yogic symbols. But the common belief is that the *ūrdhvapunḍra* represents the sacred feet of Lord Vishnu.[128] The central streak is taken to represent the grace of Srī or Lakshmi and hence called *Srī-chūrna*. We know that even during Rāmānuja's time the practice of wearing the *ūrdhvapunḍra* was in vogue. Kūrattāḻvār makes a pointed reference to the presence of *ūrdhvapunḍra* on the forehead of Lord Varadarāja.[129] But there is difference of opi-

nion regarding the exact shape of it. The Vaḍakalai and Tenkalai schools claim that it was like their own. The two schools, in course of time, have adopted two types of *punḍra*—the Vaḍakalais have the U-like mark with a prominent curvature; the Tenkalais have a slightly different type with a distinct *pāda* projection at the bottom. Most of the references regarding the old form point not to three streaks but to only one, as the mark, it is said, should resemble either the flame, bamboo, leaf, tortoise, mace, lotus-lily or fish. So in the earlier days it appears to have been a single perpendicular mark, broader at the base and narrower at the top. This is followed even now in the temples of North India. But here in the South, the emergence of the two schools has perhaps necessitated the two different forms which have unfortunately added to accentuate the division.

Be that as it may, the practice of inscribing the *tiru-nāmam* on the temple-walls seems to have come into vogue only in the Vijayanagar times. They are conspicuous by their absence in the Chōḷa structures. But in many of the structures of the Vijayanagar days both at Hampi and Chandragiri, the *tiru-nāmams* are found flanked by the *Śankha* and *Chakra*, the symbols of Vishnu, sometime with the Vijayanagar state-crest. They are neither incised nor painted but they are reliefs from the original surface of the stone and therefore coeval with the structure. Here in our temple similar '*nāmams*' originally sculptured by the Vijayanagar sculptors are found on the ornamental door-jamb of the eastern *gōpuram*, on the pillars of the *Kalyāṇa-manḍapam*, the *manḍapam* in front of the Tāyār shrine, the outer compound wall etc. (Fig. 12). They are all, as a rule, the Tenkalai marks i.e., they have the unmistakable *pāda* projection at the bottom. It should be bo.ne in mind that all the old Tenkalai marks have only a short *pāda*-projection and many of them do not bear the central line or *Srī-chūrna*. Such Tenkalai marks are found in the Chandragiri fort, almost all the leading temples of Hampi, at the entrance of Rāmānuja temple at Srīperumbūdūr with a Vijayanagar inscription, carved below. Exactly the same type of Tenkalai *nāmam* is found carved on the door-jamb of the eastern *gōpuram* entrance of Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple (Fig. 12). Portions of the *pāda* were mutilated during the later sectarian disputes; but still the traces of the *pāda* are unmistakable as illustrated here. They are not extraneous but bas-reliefs and form part of the original structure and therefore belong to the beginning of the 16th century A.D. to which date the *gōpuram* belongs.

Tenkalai *nāmams* in stone-reliefs are again found in the *Kalyāṇa manḍapa*, the *manḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine—both built by Aḷagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar in the 16th century. They are also found distributed in different shrines and structures such as the cornice of the *Abhishēka-manḍapa*, the door-jamb of the Rāmānuja shrine, the *manḍapa* in front of the Nammāḷvār shrine at the top of the outer compound walls etc. What need be noted here is that external symbol, like the internal mode of worship, was that of the preponderant sect viz., the Tenkalai. The presence of the two prominent old Tenkalai-marks as stone-reliefs at the door-jamb of the eastern *gōpura*, not to speak of the numerous ones found distributed all over the temple, is an eloquent proof of the same.

To sum up the foregoing discussion, we find that the modest temple of Attiyūr rose up in the wake of the great *Bhakti* movement fostered by the Āḷvārs. Bhūdattāḷvār, one of the earliest Āḷvārs ascribable to the seventh century A.D., has eulogised the deity of the temple. The shrine came to be considered a *Divyadēsa* or holy

shrine. But the temple was by no means prominent in the early days. The Vishnu temple of Tiruvehka in the same locality was the most prominent temple in Kāñchi. But, thanks to the association of the great *āchāryas*, like Rāmānuja, Tirukkachi-nambi and Kūrattāḻvār the temple became, from about the 11th century A.D., one of the three foremost centres of Srī-Vaishnavism, the other two being Srīrangam and Tirumalai. It became an important seat of the Visishṭādvaitic philosophy as propounded by Rāmānuja. The Pāñcharātra-form of worship which was popularised by Rāmānuja at Srīrangam and elsewhere was adopted in our temple also. Rāmānuja's emphasis on the *archa* or idol form of God gave an impetus to the ritual and structural expansion of the temple and indeed the 11th and 12th centuries witnessed remarkable improvement to the temple by way of construction of the first three *prākāras*.

Subsequent to Rāmānuja, a galaxy of eminent preceptors carried on his work. A division arose gradually among his followers on doctrinal matters. The *Prabhandic* school with its eminent exponents like Nampiḷḷai, Peria Vāchān Piḷḷai, Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya, Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni had Srīrangam as their headquarters; while the *Srī-Bāshya* school led by great savants like Naḍādūr Ammāl, Vēdānta Dēsika, Naina Varadāchāriar remained at Kāñchi. But this did not immediately bring about any cleavage or schism. In fact, there is ample evidence to show that each respected the other and both were considered complementary to the tenets of Srī-Vaishnavism, one specialising in the Tamil lore and the other in the Sanskrit lore. But, in due course, the Tenkalai school with its devotional approach, its free use of the vernacular, its liberal outlook towards the caste system, its deep attachment to Āḻvārs among whom many were from the lower castes became immensely popular and spread far and wide. Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni and his eight disciples gave a firm organisational basis to it. The Vaḍakalai school on the other hand, with its emphasis on the Vedic rites, its use of the Sanskrit language, which was foreign to the vast Tamil population, and its orthodox and conservative views on many social problems made itself more exclusive. Hence, the vast majority of the temples of South India came under the spell of the eclectic Tenkalai school. The Varadarājaswāmi temple and indeed all the 18 sacred Vishnu temples of Kāñchi were no exception to this.

In the post-Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's period i.e., from about the middle of the 15th century A.D., a number of Srī-Vaishnava leaders were associated with this temple. Moreover, the period coincided with the ascendancy of the Vijayanagar kings who bestowed special attention on the growth of the Vaishnavism. Successive Jīyars of Aḻagia Maṇavāḷa-*maṭha* held supreme position in our temple. Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-Ayyan, a disciple of Aḻagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar of Kāñchi and Kōil Kandāḍai Aṇṇan of Srīrangam did great service to our temple. So did his successors. All these leaders were the champions of the Tenkalai school who did much to popularise the festivals for the Āḻvārs like the *Tiru-adyayana* festival and encouraged the recital of the Tamil *prabhandas*. The temple became predominantly of the Tenkalai character. Several Tenkalai *āchārya-purusha* families like Prativāti Bhayankaram, Gōmaṭam Chakravarti were honoured with *Aruḷappāḍu* rights in the 17th century A.D. In the same century, Eṭṭūr Tirumalai Tātāchārya, a scion of the distinguished Tātāchārya family, was appointed the manager of the temple. He probably belonged to the Vaḍakalai school. He held an honoured place and did many useful services to the

temple. But with the fall of the Vijayanagar power in South India in about A.D. 1645, this family migrated to Mysore. The Tenkalai *stalattārs* re-asserted their power. In A.D. 1688 due to the threats of invasion by Muslim army, the idols of Varadarāja and His consorts were removed to a forest of Uḍayārpāḷayam and were brought back only after 22 years. Āttān Jīyar who did much useful work in connection with the reinstallation of the deity was appointed the manager of the temple and after him, his successors looked after it for well over 70 years. The member of the Tātāchārya family returned to Kāñchi in 1711 and, in deference to the high position held by the family, was given the honour of First Water (or *Tīrtha*) right on the condition that he would respect the existing Tenkalai mode of worship, recital etc. The Tātāchāryas honoured the Āttān Jīyar agreement for well over eighty years. But later, they sought to alter the existing procedure and introduce what the Tenkalai considered as innovations. This, later on, led to clashes between the two sects from 19th century onwards. But records from the 15th to 18th century clearly show the ascendancy of the *Prabhandic* or the Tenkalai school. Even the early stone-cut *tirunāmams* or caste-marks in this temple were Tenkalai for which tell-tale evidences are available at many places in the temple.

NOTES

1. *Tolkāppiam Poruḷ*, 5.
2. *Puram* 56.
3. *Paripāḍal* III 11. 82-83.
4. *Silappadikāram*, cantos X and XI.
5. *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppaḍai* 11. 410-411.
6. *Perumpāṇāṟṟuppadai* 11. 398-420. See *Pattupāṭṭu* ed. by U.V. Swaminatha Iyer (Madras, 1950), pp 203-205.
7. *Vide* Chapter I.
8. Verse 77.
9. III Centum.
10. *Rāmānuja-Nūṟṟandādi*, v. 31.
11. *Op. cit.*
12. T.A. Gopinatha Rao; *op cit.*, p 40.
13. For a critical survey of Rāmānuja's life period *vide* T N. Subramaniam, '*A Note on the date of Rāmānuja*' in *S I.T I.*, Vol. III, pt. II, pp. 147/160 His conclusions are worth noting here: (1) Kulōttunga II (A.D. 1133-1150) was the Chōḷa monarch who persecuted Rāmānuja and his followers; (2) Rāmānuja's flight to the Hoysāḷa country took place in A D. 1138; (3) He returned to Srīrangam after 12 years i e., A.D. 1150 after the death of Kulōttunga II, (4) The *Srī Bhāshyam* was completed in Ś 1077 or A D. 1155-56. This dating though slightly at variance with the traditional one seems to be convincing. Also see Dr. S.K. Iyengar, *History of Tirupati*, Vol. I, p. 287.
14. Rāmānuja's *Bhagavad Gītā Bhāshyam* quoted in Bharatan Kumarappa's '*The Hindu conception of the deity as culminating in Ramanuja* (Lond. 1934), pp. 191 and 192.
15. M. Yamunacharya, *Rāmānuja's Teachings in his own words*, Bombay (1963).
16. *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. IV, p. 176.
17. Rāmānuja's contemporary Tiruvarangattu-amudanār pays glowing tributes to the former's services in popularising the *Divya Prabandhams* in his *Rāmānuja-nūṟṟandādi*. In the first verse he calls Rāmānuja as the disciple of Nammālvār.
18. Though there is evidence to show that the Āḻvār's *Prabandhams* were recited in a few Vishnu temples like Srīrangam earlier than Rāmānuja's time, it is agreed that he was largely responsible to make their recital an essential feature on all festival occasions (K.A.N. Sastri : *Chōlas*, p. 639 and T.K.T. Veeraraghavacharya, *History of Tirupati*, II, pp. 953 and 974.
19. *S I I*, III, No. 80.
20. 572 of 1919.
21. Chapters V and VI.
22. 493 of 1919.
23. The fixing of responsibility for the schism is a moot point and different views have been expressed. The usual popular view is that the Tenkalai line became distinct with Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya and the Vaḍakalai with Vēdānta Dēsika. "After Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya and Vēdānta Dēsika, the

split between the Tenkalai and Vaḍakalai became more pronounced. While the latter traditions were carried on by Varadāchārya, Brahmatantra Svatantra and other disciples, the Tenkalai position was consolidated and established by Manavāḷa Mahāmuni." P.N. Srinivasachari, *Philosophy of Visishtādvaita*, p. 533. But another reputed scholar A. Govindacharya fixes the responsibility on Vēdānta Dēsika and not Piḷḷai Lōkācharya. He says : "Lōkāchārya was not the first great teacher of the Tenkalai school. In his day there was no distinction of such schools. If any schism arose in virtue of differences of interpretation it is in all probability to be attributed to the time of Vēdāntāchārya. In Vēdāntāchārya's works such differences in interpretation of the teachings that prevailed before his day are clearly discernible." But he quickly adds that Vēdāntāchārya looked upon the opinions of those from whom he differed as simply due to specialisation of certain aspects of truth. Therefore, Govindacharya rightly concludes that no *odium theologicum* could be imputed to him (p. 716).
Tenkalai and Vaḍakalai : J.R.A.S. 1912, pp. 173-177.

24. On the whole, there are said to be eighteen differences. A. Govindacharya, *Ashtādasabhēdas*, J R.A S. 1910.
P N. Srinivasachari : *The Philosophy of Visishtādvaita*, Adyar, 1943, pp. 534 ff.
25. V. Rangacharya, *op. cit.*, p. 178.
26. *Ibid.*
27. Crole, *Chingleput District Gazetteer*, p, 35.
28. From the *Guruparamparai* of Pinbalagia Perumāḷ Jīyar, it is learnt that Battar's contemporary on the Chōḷa throne was one Tribhuvanavīradēva. We know that this title was borne by Kulōttunga III in his inscriptions. The latter ruled from A.D. 1178 to 1217, *S I T.I.*, Vol. III, Pt. II, p. 159.
29. *Srī Ranganāthastōtram.*
30. The *kōil-olugu* records that Nampiḷḷai was alive about Ś 1175 i.e , A.D. 1253 when the Pāṇḍyan king Jaṭāvarman Sundara covered the central shrine of Srīrangam with gold. *S.I.T.I.*, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
31. *Paradvāti Pañchagam.*
32. *Achārya-hridayam*, Sūtra 84; *ibid.*, ed. by B.M. Purushottama Naidu, Madras, 1965, pp. 192-193.
33. R. Ramanujacharya : *Ātrēya Rāmānuja : His Life and Works*, Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiar Com. Volume, Annamalai University, 1941, pp. 356-364.
34. This is stated in Doddayāchārya's biography on Dēsika entitled *Vaibhavaprakāsika*; also Vij. Sexcentenary Com. Volume, p. 49.
35. Dr. S.K. Iyengar, *Sources*, pp. 34-35.
36. *Vide* Chapter V
37. Verse 5.
38. *Adaikkalapattu*, verse 1.
39. *Ibid*, verse 4.
40. *Ibid.*, verse 9.
41. *Meivritamānmiyam*, verse 27.
42. P.B. Annangaracharya, *Satsampradāyasārārtha-raksha* in *Srī Rāmānujan*, Nos. 212-213 (July 1966), p. 20 ff.
43. Professor R. Ramanujacharya agrees with this view and states : "The division of the Vaishnavite fold into the Northern and the Southern schools does not appear to have been known in Dēsika's time. There is ample evidence to show there was great cordiality among the Vaishnavite thinkers and the eminent teachers now regarded as affiliated to the Southern School held Dēsika in great esteem and veneration"—Venkatanatha in *Srī Vēdānta Dēsika Sampradāya Sabha Souvenir* (Bombay, 1968), p. 53.
44. V. Rangacharya is of the view that it was out of disgust with the prevailing atmosphere of Srīrangam that Dēsika left for Satyamangalam, *Q.J.M.S.* VII, p. 111. But from Dēsika's work *Abhīdasatvam* it is seen that far from being disgusted, he longed to live at Srīrangam.
A free English rendering of verse 28 can be given : "Oh Lord ! my youth was spent in drinking deep into the beauties of the works of Rāmānuja. Now my hair has turned completely grey. Hereafter, kindly grant me this : Let me live at Srīrangam or any similar place which is free from the enemies and where people are mutual well-wishers."
In another context, he states that his mind which was not fully mature, blossomed on account of his close association with the elder-*āchāryas* at Srīrangam (*Bhagavat Dhyana-sōpānam*).
45. P.B. Annangarachariar (*op. cit.*) has cited

several instances from Dēsika's works to show that in interpreting the Tamil *Prabandhams*, he has faithfully followed Peria Vāchān Pillai's famous commentary.

46. *Ep. Ind.* XXV, No. 34.
47. *Ibid.*
48. S.K. Iyengar, *Prativāti Bhayankara Annan* in *J.I.H.* XVIII, 1939, pp. 378-383

    Prativāti Bhayankaram Annan figures equally prominently in the history of both the schools. He was a disciple of both Naina Varadāchārya and Manavāla Mahāmunigal. He has written poems in praise of the latter as well as Vēdānta Dēsika. This amply proves that even in his period the differences between the two schools had not hardened. But after his contact with Manavāla Mahāmuni at Srīrangam P B. Annan joined the Prabandhic school. P.B. Annan's descendants are also known to have belonged to the Tenkalai school and many of them are still living in Kāñchi and Tirupati. See *J.I.H.* XVIII, 1939, pp. 382-383.
49. The traditional date of birth is Kali 4471, *Aippasi-Mūlam* star he lived for 73 years. See *S.I.T I*, III, Pt. II, p. 1361.
50. The *Kōil-olugu* gives Ś 1347 (A.D. 1425) as the date for his advent at Srīrangam.
51. This name is found both in the *Kōil-olugu* and the *Tirumalai-olugu* and it is interesting to find that the same name occurs in the inscriptions of our temple.
52. These verses are noted for their rhythm and beauty.
53. Prativāti Bhayankaram Annangaracharya gives a comprehensive treatment to all the works of Manavāla Mahāmuni in his *Varavaramunindra Granthamālā* (Kāñchi, 1966).
54. Even in 1879, it is reported in the Chingleput District Gazetteer, that 'the majority of the Vaishnavite Sūdras are Tenkalai' (p. 35). Also see '*The History and the Culture of Indian People*, VI (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, p. 558).
55. P.N. Srinivasacharya, *op. cit*, p. 524.
56. The *ashtadiggajas* of Manavāla Mahāmuni are mentioned in the *Tirumalai-olugu* as also in the work of Erumbiappa, the disciple of Mahāmuni. They are (1) Vānamāmalai Jīyar, (2) Tiruvenkata Rāmānuja Jīyar, (3) Pattarpirān Jīyar, (4) Kōil-kandādai Annan. (5) Prativāti Bhayankaram Annan, (6) Erumbiappa, (7) Kidāmbi Appu'ār, (8) Kidāmbi Appillai. See *Tirumalai-olugu*, ed by K. Balasundara Naicker (T.T D. Tirupati, 1953), p. 85.
57. V. Rangacharya, '*Historical Evolution of Srī-Vaishnavism in South India* in *The Cultural Heritage of India* (Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, 1956), Vol. IV, pp 184-185.
58. 653 of 1919; *S.I.T I*, I, No. 390.
59. 479 of 1919.
60. *S.I T I.*, I., No. 429.
61. It is interesting to note in this connection that an inscription of the Vijayanagar times which is datable to not later than the 16th century records an endowment of a village as gift (*Tiruvidaiyāṭiam*) to Manavāla-Mahāmuni at Srīperumbūdūr. This clearly shows that Mahāmuni was deified at Srīperumbūdūr in the 16th century, if not slightly earlier (203 of 1949-50).
62. *T D E.R.*, Vol. VI, Part II, Table No. 49
63. *Tirumalai-olugu : op. cit.*, pp. 104-106.
    The learned editor K. Balasundara Naicker has shown that this work was written sometime before Sadāśiva's time, roughly before A.D. 1550. Many of the details are remarkably supported by inscriptions.
64. An epigraph dated A.D. 1514 refers to an offering in honour of Alagia-Manavāla Jīyar, the disciple of Pattarpirān Jīyar. The birth-star of the former is mentioned as *Aśvini* in the month of *Āni* (*T.T D.*, Vol. III, No. 98).
65. *T.D.I.*, Vol. II, No. 139.
66. *T.D.E R.*, I, p. 47.
67. *T.T D Rep.* IV, No. 46.
68. 447 and 443 of 1919.
69. 448 of 1919.
70. This work *Vaibhava-prakāśika* of the *maṭha* is available in fragments in palm-leaves with the present Jīyar of the Alagiya-manavāla-Jīyar *maṭha* at Kāñchi.
71. *S.I.T.I.*, V, No. 438.
72. *A.R.E.*, 1936-37, pp. 90-91.
73. See *T.D.E R.*, Vol. II, for a number of inscriptions recording his benefactions.
74. *A.R.E.* 1936-37, pp. 90-91; K.V. Raman, *Kandādai Rāmānujadāsan*, *Bharatiya Vidya, XXIX*, 1969.

75. *S I T I*, No. 348 (648 of 1919).
76. *T D.E R*, Vol. I, pp. 47 and 92.
77. T.K.T.Veeraraghavachariar: *History of Tirupati*, T.T.D. publication, Vol. II, p. 584.
78. *T.D.E R.*, Vol. I, pp. 46-47 and 216-217.
79. T.K.T. Veeraraghavachari, *op. cit.*
80. *A.R.E.*, 1936-37, pp. 90-91. *Kōil-olugu*, Ed. by V.N. Hari Rao (1961), p. 165 ff.
81. *Ibid.*
82. *A.R.E.* 1936-37, pp. 90-91; *A.R.E.* 1937-38, pp. 90-91.
83. 476 of 1919.
84. 646 of 1919.
85. 422 of 1919; *S I.T I.*, I, pp 327-328.
86. 579 of 1919.
87. 657 of 1919. See Appendix II 'D' for the text.
88. Mr. T P. Palaniappa Pillai, *Tiruvēnkata Ulā* (Tirupati, 1950), Introduction, p. ix.
89. *Manuscharitamu*, canto I, verse 6.
90. *Amuktamālyada*, canto VI, verse 6.
91. *T.D.E.R.*, VI, Part II, Table No. 87. S.K. Iyengar: *History of Tirupati*—According to the Sannidhi *Guruparamparat*, Srinivasa was born in A.D. 1379, started the *matha* in 1398 and held it till A.D. 1458. Cf. S. N. Venkatesa Aiyar, *History of Ahobilam Mutt*, p. 17. But he admits "the chronology of the first seven Jīyars is a matter of dispute." Also see *A R.E.* 1920, p. 114.
92. 411 of 1919.
93. The succession list of preceptors (*Samāsrayana-Paramparai*) of Ādivan Saṭagōpa Jīyar includes Nañjīyar, Nam-Piḷḷai, Vaḍakku Tiruvīdi Piḷḷai of the Prabandhic school. The *grantha-parampara* of the *matha* includes the *Vaḍakalai āchāryas*—see *T.D.E.R.*, VI, Part II, Table 87. According to the *Tenkalai* tradition, the first six Jīyars of this *matha* were *Tenkalai.*
94. *Ibid.*
95. 374 and 373 of 1919.
96. 579 of 1919.
97. 576 of 1919.
98. *T D.E.R.*, I, pp. 283 ff, for full details regarding their activities at Tirupati.
99. 495 of 1919.
100. *T D.E R.*, I, *op. cit.*
101. 495 of 1919.
102. 583 of 1919.
103. No 146 of *T.T.D.*
104. 653 of 1919; *S.I.T.I.*, I, No. 390.
105. S.K. Iyengar, *Sources*, pp. 33-35 and 71-79.
106. *Ep. Ind.*, XXIX, pp. 72-73.
107. 383 of 1919.
108. He is said to have been the adopted son of Ayyānayyangar of Satamarshana gōtra and belonging to Tirumalai Nambi family (30 of 1921). Another writer holds that Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchāri of Kāñchi record belongs to a branch family, cf. T.K T.V. Chary, *History of Tirupati*, Vol. II.
109. 479 of 1919.
110. 588 of 1919.
111. 363 of 1919: *S.I.T I.*, III, Pt. II, p 1358.
112. 475 of 1919.
113. 651 of 1919; *S.I.T.I*, *op. cit.*, p. 1357.
114. 92 and 95 of 1923.
115. 421 of 1919.
116. 587 of 1919.
117. This is borne out by the mention of a number of local managers functioning in temples of Tiruvehka, Srīperumbūdūr etc.
118. *Ep. Car* III (1) T.N. 23. Hayavadana Rao: *History of Mysore*, p. 247.
119. *Ibid*, p. 225.
120. *S.I.T.I*, I, No. 388.
121. This is supported by the document in the possession of the present members of this family, which was filed in the courts and held as genuine by them.
122. 398 of 1919.
123. 423 of 1919.
124. *A.R.E.* 1920, p. 122.

    In a copper plate grant deposited in the Madras Museum and dated Ś 1636 (A.D. 1714-15) the same Srinivāsadāsa *alias* Attān Jīyar is mentioned as the protege of Todarmalla. The Jīyar's grant of five villages to the temple of Srimushnam is recorded in that grant. *Vide* R. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Catalogue of Copper Plate Grants*, p. 41.
125. Though hailing from the Andhra, the Jīyar's interest in the Tamil *prabandhams* was great. He wrote a Tamil work

named *Adayavalaindām Arumpadam.*

126. Printed documents in *A.S.* 212 of 1909, p. 158.

127. Exhibit 'A' of *A.S.* No. 175 of 1910.

128. *Ibid.*, Exhibit 'B'.

129. For a discussion of the rationale of the *ūrdhvapundra* and the various interpretations see K. Devarathachari, *Srī-Vaishnavism and its caste-marks*, Q.J.M.S., V, 4, pp. 125-139.

CHAPTER V

PŪJAS AND FESTIVALS

In a Hindu temple, the daily offer of worship to the various deities at different times in the day, is of fundamental importance. The day-to-day ceremonies connected with the worship are called the *Nitya-pūja* while the occasional ceremonies in connection with some special festival are called the *Naimittika*. The daily offerings are obligatory and are very essential to preserve the sanctity of the shrine. They represent the basic ceremonial rituals to be performed in the temple, which are governed by the *āgamas*. The Vaishnava āgamas fall under two groups: the *vaikhānasa* and the *pāñcharātra*. The former was perhaps older but not so popular. The *Pāñcharātra āgama* literature came to be considered as authoritative as the *Vēdas* by the Bhāgavatas, as they contain the quintessence of the religion of devotion or *Bhakti*. As the reference to the *archa*-form or image-worship in the Vēdas was at best considered to be vague, the *pāñcharātra*-literature which glorified the doctrine of *avatāra* or divine incarnation and the *archāvatāra*, or the belief of the presence of God in images, were considered superior to the *Vēdas*.[1] The Vaishnavas claim great antiquity for the *pāñcharātra-āgamas* and consider them to be the bedrock of the temple-worship, the *pūjas*, festivals etc. They contain liturgical texts with the emphasis on the form, nature and meaning of the rituals, and the earthly and spiritual benefits assured to their ardent followers. The word *āgama* is indeed the counterpart of *mantra* or *vēda* and denotes a popular cult wherein practical religious formalities and offerings in the form of fruits, flowers, food and drinks made with devotion, take the place of incantations and sacrifices.[2] Rāmānuja who emphasised the devotional aspect (*Bhakti*) of religion and propagated the need for a personal God with all auspicious qualities, found the *Pāñcharātra*-literature a great source of inspiration. He popularised it in South India by introducing it at Srīrangam temple and Melkōte in the Mysore country. Kāñchi also was influenced by his reforms. Thus, the three important texts or the *samhitas* of the *pāñcharātra*-literature which are considered to be the "three gems", were adopted for the three leading temples—the *Paushkara-samhita* at Srīrangam, the *Jayākhya-samhita* at Hastigiri or Kāñchi and the *Īśwara-samhita* at Melkōte.[3] The interpolated chapter in the *Jayākhya-samhita* informs us that the *Pādmasamhita* was the commentary and elaboration of the *Jayākhya samhita*.[4] The former has attained unique popularity due to its encyclopaedic range of interests, covering systematically almost all major topics of the *pāñcharātra* concern. This is followed in our temple for all ceremonial rituals connected with the installation of images, consecration ceremonies, festivals, offerings etc., and hence a knowledge of the same is considered essential to be the chief priest of the temple.

If the *nitya-pūja* denotes the daily offerings to the deity, the *naimittika*-class inclu-

des the various festivals (*utsavas*) celebrated in particular months of a year not only for the main deity but also for the subsidiary ones. These festivals are not compulsory but they add colour and grandeur to the temples. They are great occasions when the common folk from even the distant places gather to take part in the celebration. But their scale and grandeur are determined by the financial resources of the temple and the benefactions of the devotees. From the epigraphs of Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, we know that this temple was richly endowed with provisions for the daily offerings (*nitya-nimitangaḷukku*)[5] as well as a number of festivals which have, in the course of centuries, become famous for their grandeur and beauty.

Section 1

Pūja or Worship

The ceremonial worship in this temple takes place five times in the day. First early in the morning, the second at twelve in the noon, the third in the evening at six, the fourth at eight in the night and the fifth and the last at nine in the night, after which the temple is closed. Of these, the most important and elaborately done is the early morning service. The others are all practically abridged versions of the same. The morning worship consists of six *āsanas* or stages. The temple priest or the *archaka* conducts the worship. The first *āsana* is known as the *mantra-āsana* by which the presence of the Almighty is invoked; the second is the *snāna-āsana* during which time the *tirumañjanam* or holy bath is performed to the deity; the third is the *Alankāra-āsana* when the deity is clothed and adorned with jewels. The fourth is the *Bhōga-āsana* when food is offered to the deity. The fifth is the *mantra-āsana* when a ceremony called *mantra-pushpam* is performed i.e., *archana* is done by offering *tuḷasi* (basil) leaves and chanting the *mantras*. This is done for about ten or fifteen minutes. Then comes the last stage known as *sayana-āsana* when the deity is believed to go to sleep. The *pūja* ceremony is closed with this. This last-mentioned service is reserved for the night.

Another important item in the *nitya-pūja* is what is known as the *sēvākālam* or the congregational recitation of the portions of the *Prabhandams* which takes place during the entire duration of the *pūja*. This ritual reaches its climax with *sāthumurai* after which the consecrated water (*tīrtham*) and food (*prasādam*) are distributed to the reciters and other devotees.

The pūja-ceremonies at other times of the day are not done so elaborately. In the evening service *mantrapushpam* and *sēvākālam* are again done. The last service in the night is called popularly in this temple as *Tirugusādam*, when sweet rice-pudding is offered to God before He goes to sleep.[7]

A portion of the consecrated food is taken and offered to the Āḻvārs and *Āchāryas* in their respective shrines. There are *archakas* or priests in all the attendant or ancillary shrines who attend to the daily *pūja*, holy bath etc., in their respective shrines. Separate offerings are done to Narasimha and Perundēvi Tāyār.

Elaborate qualifications and training are stipulated in the *āgamas* and *śāstras* for the temple-priests. The interpolated section of the *Jayākhya-samhita* which deals exclusively with the system of worship prevailing at Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, lays down certain basic qualifications. It states that they should be well-versed

in the Kanva-Sāka and the *prapatti-śāstras* and should be clean in their personal life. Preferably, those born in the *Kauśika* and *Aupakāyan-gōtras* should be selected and given initiation into the *Jayākya-tantra*.[8]

Holy Bath

Tirumañjanam or *abhishēkam* or the holy bath is a picturesque ceremony in a Vishnu temple. It forms an essential daily item in the worship, but it is done only to the *Bhōga-mūrti*, represented by a silver image. For the *mūla-bhēra*, as well as Perundēvi Tāyār, this is done on every Friday. For the *Utsava-bhēra* or the processional deity the holy bath is performed on six days in a month and they are : the first day of a month, the full-moon day, the New moon day and the day following and on the days of the Hasta and Sravana stars. On all these days, the processional deity is taken to the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* where the holy bath is performed to the accompaniment of chanting of Sanskrit and Tamil verses and the periodical display of the trumpets and drums. In the evening there would be a procession of the deity in the streets. Besides these, on all festive occasions like the Deepāvaḷi, Yugādi etc., special *Tirumañjanams* are performed to the *Utsava-bhēra*.

It is interesting to recall the tradition that Rāmānuja used to bring water daily from the *śāla*-well to the temple for the holy bath for the deity. This service known as *Sālaikkiṇaru-kaimkarya* is still continued here and a special man is posted to attend to it. A record of Vikrama Chōḷa dated A.D. 1129 refers to the monthly birth-star festival for the Mudal-Āḻvārs during which time Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ was brought out and bathed daily with eightyone *kalaśas* or water-pots.[9] The endowments for the holy bath became more in the Vijayanagar times. We have an inscription of A.D. 1540 which records the grant of three villages to meet the expenses of 15 Ekādasi days in a year inclusive of the *Tirumañjanam*.[10] A record of A.D. 1574 mentions that *abhishēka* was performed for the *Mulabhēra* every Friday.[11] This practice is still continued. Endowments for *Tirumañjanam* during various festivals like Yugādi, Dīpāvali etc., are recorded in the epigraphs of the 16th and 17th centuries A.D.[12]

The record dated A.D. 1574 mentioned above refers to the objects used for the holy bath as *Tirumañjana-drivyam* but does not specify them. But usually, on such occasions, various items are used for bathing the deity such as oil, milk, curd, coconut-water, rose-water, turmeric, sandal etc. After the bath is over, the images are dried with cloth and dressed with fine clothes and bedecked with ornaments and fresh garlands. A salad with a mixture of fruits, coconut, honey (*pañchāmrutham*) and lemon juice (*panagam*) and betels are offered to the deity and later distributed to the devotees. An interesting record[13] mentions the items of perfumery and other articles used during the holy bath such as :

Kastūri	(musk)
Kunkumappu	(saffron)
Pannīr	(rose-water)
Chandanam	(sandal-paste)
Karpūram	(camphor)
Parimaḷam	(scented oil)
Pitāmbaram	(fine silk clothes)

Kastūri or musk is usually placed on the forehead as *tilaka* before the *puṇḍra* is applied. *Kunkumappu* or saffron is mixed with water for the bath as it gives a fine smell. Refined camphor or *Pachai-Karpūram* is also added. The ordinary camphor (*karpūra*) is used for the *Dīpa-āratti* or waving a light in front of God. *Pannīr* or rose-water and sandal-paste mixed with water are used for the bath.

Another type of application known as *Pulukkāppu* is mentioned in an epigraph of Srīranga II dated A.D. 1575.[14] It is a reference to the smearing of civet-oil over the image during the *abhishēkam*, after which plain water is poured. *Champaka-oil* was also used for the bath. This was done every Friday.

Special services or Sandhi

Apart from these normal daily offerings, special offerings or services were instituted by kings and other men of note and rank. Such offerings or *Sandhis* were instituted in large numbers in the 12th and 13th centuries and they were often named after the donors. One of the earliest of such offerings was the *kōdaṇḍarāman-sandhi* instituted in honour to Kulōttunga III. For these the income from two villages amounting to 2,000 pon was donated.[15] The other services instituted during the same reign were the *Vīra-kēraḷan-sandhi* and the other *Sundara-Pāṇḍya-Kālingarayan-sandhi*. Though the inscription does not specify the nature of the service, it provides for the expenses amounting to 3,000 pon required for the service. It included the feeding of 45 Brahmins in the two services.[16] In the 11th year of Kulōttunga III, another service named *Dharma-paripālan-sandhi* was instituted by Dharmaparipālan *alias* Rājādhirāja Malaiyarayan, one of the *Malai-mudalis* of the king.[17]

A service named *Āḷappirandān-sandhi* was instituted in the 14th year of Rājarāja III (A.D. 1230) for which land was donated at Perunagar. This service was named in honour of the Sambuvaraya chieftain Edirilisōḷa Sambuvarayan Āḷappirandān *alias* Rājarāja Sambuvarayan grandson of Sengeni Ammiappan. Another epigraph dated A.D. 1247 refers to the same service and adds that it was performed soon after the service called the *Gaṇḍagōpālan-sandhi*.[18] The latter was first instituted in A.D. 1230 and was subsequently patronised by numerous grants.[19] It seems to have been an important and grand service instituted by Tikka I *alias* Gaṇḍagōpāladēva. The other services mentioned in the epigraph of this time are : *Rāhuttarayan-sandhi* called after an officer under Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla;[20] *Kumāragōpālan-sandhi* perhaps called after Gaṇḍagōpāla's son;[21] *Amarābaraṇan-sandhi* named after Siyagangan, the Ganga Lord of Kūvalpura or Kolar;[22] *Ānaikaṭṭina-Sankaranārāyaṇana-sandhi* instituted by Rājagaṇḍagōpālan in A.D. 1220.[23]

Divya-prabhandam Recital

In no other temple of South India is the congregational recitation of the inspired Tamil hymns of the Āḻvārs and the Āchāryas, called the *Divya-prabhanda-Sevākālam*, done before the deity in such a methodical and grand manner as in this temple. This service called the *Adayāpākam*-service is rendered both inside the temple on the *pūja* occasions and during processions in festival times. It will not be an exaggeration to say that it had been one of the important features responsible for making this temple famous and much-sought-after by the Srī-Vaishnava devotees. The *Divya-prabhanda*-reciters formed the vanguard of all processions. It is said that the *vēdas* go in

search of God, whereas the latter goes in search of the *Divya-prabhandam*, as He longs to hear the devotional songs of His devotees. The great poet Kamban, in his work *Satagōpan-andādi*, has paid a glowing tribute to *Divya-prabhandams* and their reciters.[24] He says :

> "The eternal, brilliant Lord of the Universe can transcend the reach of the *vēdas*, the keenest intelligence of the learned and the wise; He cannot but be bound by the love-lorn, devotional songs of saint (Nammāḻvār) of Kurukūr."

In another verse he emphasises that the recital of *Tiruvōymoḻi* was the most important item in the temple-festivals. He says : 'Had not the saint (Nammāḻvār) come to Kurukūr and rendered into the sweet Tamil all the thousand and odd eternal Vēdas, where would the Brahmins, their temples, feasts and festivals and their beauties stand ? They would have been nowhere.' Thus, there is no doubt that distinguishing features of a Srī-Vaishnava temple are the offer of worship of the twelve Āḻvārs and the recital and exposition of the hymns of Nammāḻvār and the other eleven Āḻvārs. An abridged version containing select excerpts from the works of the various Āḻvārs is recited almost daily during the *nitya-pūja* and more elaborately on the festive occasions. The great āchārya Nāthamuni resuscitated and codified the composition of the Āḻvārs and popularised their singing with musical notes. Following him, Rāmānuja made their recital an important feature in the temples. The *Āchāryas* who succeeded Rāmānuja and particularly belonging to the Prabhandic school, were chiefly responsible for maintaining and preserving the mode and style of reciting these Tamil verses. In fact, even today, the vast majorty of the *Divya-prabhanda ghōṣṭi* or reciters in most of the temples of South India belong to the Tenkalai school. They are also called *Iyal-Ghōṣṭi*. The rendering of these Tamil verses with correct intonations is transmitted from generation to generation by oral teachings called *Sandhai*. These Tamil songs, couched in simple and touching language, when rendered in this traditional *Iyal* style, are extremely moving and a large concourse of people is attracted and held spell-bound for hours together.

Usually, in all the *Srī-Vaishnava* temples, in the mornings, the *Tiruppāvai* is recited and in the evenings passages from the *Nityānusandānam* are recited. To the latter will be added the relevant passages which are in praise of that particular temple. But in Varadarājaswāmi temple, the practice is rather peculiar. Here, the reciters complete the 4,000 verses thrice or four times a year singing fifty verses every day. They continue the cycle even when the festival days intervene. On such occasions besides reciting their usual 50 verses they recite more number of verses, as they go out in procession. But Nammāḻvār's *Tiruvōymoḻi* is recited only within the precincts of the temple and never in the streets.

Besides the Āḻvārs' *Divya-prabhandams*, the other Tamil hymns that are recited on certain specific occasions are : Amudanār's *Rāmānujanūṟṟandādi* and Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni's *Upadēsaratnamālai* and *Tiruvōymoḻi-nuṟṟandādi*. The first one is in praise of Rāmānuja, the second in praise of the Āḻvārs and *āchāryas* and the last in praise of Nammāḻvār.

Stōtrapāṭa-recital

Sanskrit laudatory verses are also recited in this temple on six specified occasions. The members of the Tātāchārya family take a leading part in it. Kūrattāḻvār's

Varadarājastavam and Vēdānta Dēsika's *Varadarāja-Panchāsat* are recited.

Food-offerings

Offering of water and food or *tīrtham* and *prasādam* to the deities on the different occasions or specified hours of the day is an important item in the daily *pūjas*. This holy water and food after they are offered to God are distributed among the temple-employees and also to the devotees who have gathered for the service. The terms used in the inscriptions for the holy food are *Amudu, prasādams* or *taḷigai*. The latter term is peculiar to the Vishnu temples. The food is offered thrice in a day in the morning (*Udayakālam*), midday (*Uchikālam*) and the early hours of the night (*ardhajāmam*). The offering occurs usually at the end of each of the series of functions in the course of the worship of the deity. During the late Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar days, extensive provisions for the food-offerings are recorded in the inscriptions, not only for the daily routine but also on numerous festive occasions. In fact, most inscriptions give a long list of details regarding the different proportions of the various provisions and groceries required for different kinds of food-offerings. During Achyuta Rāya's time, a '*Mahā-neivēdyam*' a big special offering was instituted in the temple for the king's merit for which 14 villages were donated. The epigraph gives graphic details of the *Taḷigai* and other items of groceries.[25] While for the daily routine, only ordinary plain rice was offered, special food preparations were offered often. They are mentioned frequently in the inscriptions and they make an interesting reading :

(1) *Pānagam* — Lemon juice mixed with water and jaggery.
(2) *Vaḍaparuppu* — Gram soaked in water and mixed with salt, green-chillies etc.
(3) *Kari-amudu* — Cooked vegetable.
(4) *Daddhiyōdanam* — Rice mixed with curd (S.I.T.I., I, No. 346, p. 318).
(5) *Dōsaippaḍi* — Rice-cake (S.I.T I , I, No. 353, p. 325).
(6) *Adirasapaḍi* — Sweet-cake (*Ibid*, No. 357, p. 332).
(7) *Appapaḍi* — Sweet-cake (*Ibid*, 354, p. 328).
(8) *Vaḍai* — Cake made with bengal-gram (*Ibid*, 366, p. 343).
(9) *Sukiyinpaḍi* — Made of dried ginger (*Ibid*, p. 346).
(10) *Puliyōrai* — Cooked-rice mixed with tamarind and salt (*Ibid*, p. 351).
(11) *Ellōrai* — Cooked-rice mixed with gingelly seed (*Ibid*, p. 351).
(12) *Kadugōrai* — Cooked-rice mixed with mustard (*Ibid*, p. 351).
(13) *Pongal* — Rice-pudding (*Ibid*).
(14) *Iḍḍali* — Rice-cake (*Ibid*).
(15) *Akkāravadasil* — Sweet pudding with cooked rice and milk (*Ibid*).

Section 2

FESTIVALS

Not only through worship and daily service to the deities, but through the impressive celebrations of their annual festivals, when the images were taken out in processions, that this temple created religious fervour among the huge crowds of people drawn from far and near. The processions of Lord Varadarāja afford a

grand spectacle of royal pageantry. Some of the general features of the festivals can be noted here :

(i) The deity is beautifully dressed and decorated with several costly jewels mounted on various vehicles of wooden horse, elephant, lion, swan etc., and taken in procession to different quarters of the Kāñchi city. The *Gangai-kondān-mandapam*, about 3 miles away from the temple, is the usual terminus for all the processions.

(ii) The deity is given all the traditional royal paraphernalia like huge umbrellas (*chatra*) and *chāmaras* (fly-whisks) as He is considered to be the king of kings. Two huge umbrellas, fly-whisks or *chāmaras* flank the deity. The priests or *archakas* sit in front. The processional deity is stopped at various places so that the devotees can go near to offer worship.

(iii) In front of the procession proceed the persons bearing the sacred banners and festoons; then follow the trumpeters, drum-beaters announcing the Lord's arrival. Usually, the drums are carried on the horse's back. Then come the caparisoned elephants. Next in order comes the huge concourse of *Prabhandam*-reciters called *Iyal-ghōṣṭi*. They stand closely together and move forward slowly reciting the *Divya-prabhandams* in their characteristic mellifluous tones.

(iv) Behind the deity come the Vēda-reciters called *Vēdapārāyaṇa-ghōṣṭi*, who recite the different *vēdas* in the traditional orthodox style.

(v) Following them come the various *Bhajana-ghōṣṭis* or groups of singers of devotional songs, mostly from Tamil *prabhandams*. They come in groups from different parts of Tamil country to take part in this devotional service. They are also known as the *Bhāgavata-ghōṣṭis* and their recitals are marked by great emotion and ecstasy.

These are the general features of the processions of this temple. Let us now review the various festivals that take place in the course of the year. From the inscriptions of this temple and the literary references, it is seen that many of these festivals have been going on for centuries. In earlier stages, they seem to have been done on a smaller scale. But from about 15th and 16th centuries, the festivals and celebrations increased in number and grandeur, thanks to the numerous royal grants and other private benefactions.

Chitra (April)

The most important festival in this month is the *Tiruavatāra-utsavam* which celebrates the birth of Srī Varadarāja. This falls on the *hasta*-star when the Lord is believed to have appeared before Brahma from the sacrificial fire. It marks the descent of God Varadarāja on the earth. Special *tirumañjanam* (bath) and procession in the streets around the temple take place. On the full moon day of this month called *Chitrapaurnami* day, Lord Varadarāja is taken in procession to the banks of the river Pālār for the famous *Naḍabhāvi-utsavam*. On the way He goes to the Ayyangār-kuḷam. On the river-bank *Brahma-ārādana*, Brahma's worship of Lord Varadarāja is re-enacted and the same is witnessed by thousands of worshippers. This performance of the festival in A.D. 1595 is attested by an inscription which calls the festival as '*Tiruvūral*'. The latter word refers to the spring-water in

the river-bed where the festival takes place.

The *Thōṭṭa-utsava* or Garden-festival is another important festival during this month. This festival was probably instituted in the 14th century by one Echchaya-Dannayākkar, a minister of the Hoysāḷa king Ballāḷa III.[26] Two other epigraphs dated Ś 1471 and Ś 1473 record grant for making provisions and offerings for the garden-festival.[27] It is called *Tōppu Tiruṇāḷ* and *Vasanta Tōppu utsavam* in the month of Chitra. In A.D. 1595, the garden was known as *Visva-pundita-tōppu*, wherein there was a sixteen-pillared *maṇḍapa* for the celebration of the festivals.[28]

Vaikāsi (May)

The most famous festival, namely, the *Brahmōtsava*, is conducted on a spectacular scale during this month for ten days. The day before the actual commencement of the festival is known as the *Sēnai Mudaliār Utsavam* or *Āḷvār Tirunāḷ*. In the evening of that day, Sēnai Mudaliār or Vishvaksēna is propitiated. He is taken in procession to collect the *mirtigai* or the sacred earth for construction of the altar for conducting *hōma* or sacrifice in the mornings and evenings during the ten days of this festival. · This ceremony of the collection of sacred earth is mentioned as *Tirumaṇ-puḷudivāra* in an inscription of Sadāśiva's time (dated A D. 1558).[29]

First day : Early in the morning Srī Varadarājaswāmi with his consorts Srī-dēvi and Bhū-dēvi is taken in procession from the Hastigiri, gorgeously adorned with exquisite jewels to the *Vāhana-maṇḍapa* in the outermost *prākāra*. Then the *dwaja-rōhaṇam* or flag-hoisting takes place to the accompaniment of ritualistic observances, as ordained by the *Pāñcharātra-āgama*. The hoisting of the flag formally signifies the commencement of the festival. After this, offerings are made to the guardian-deities of the eight cardinal directions known as the *Ashṭadikpālas*. Then the deity goes out in procession in a golden *vimāna* or *chapram* along the streets of Kāñchi to the *Gangaikoṇḍān-maṇḍapa*, about 3 miles away, and returns to the temple by about 10 a.m.

In the evening, the deity again goes out in procession on the *Simha-vāhana* (lion-vehicle) and returns to the temple by about 9 p.m. After this, takes place a unique celebration in this temple called the *Dvitīya-rakshā-bandanam* or *Irandām kāppu*. For this Lord Varadarāja is taken back to his shrine on the Hastigiri where this second *rakshā-bandanam* is performed. This is very unusual because in the other temples when once the *Utsavabhēras* are taken out of their sanctum and the flag-hoisting ceremony is completed, they are never taken back to the *sanctum-sanctorum* till the flag is drawn down after the ten-day festival is over. But this peculiar practice was occasioned by certain historical circumstances. During the troublesome days of the Muslim invasion, the main deities weie removed to the *Udayārpāḷayam* forest where they remained for some years. During this time, substitute idols were installed here and festivals conducted. Some years afterwards, when peace prevailed in the land, the original images were brought back to Kāñchi. Just then, the second day of the annual Vaisāka festival was going on. The devotees hastened back to the temple with the original image in the evening of the second day. Rejoiced at the happy event, a fresh *rakshā-bandanam* was done for that deity and at the same time the festival continued with the original deities. This is said to have occasioned the second *kāppu* festival which continues to be celebrated even now.

The details of the *vāhanas* or vehicles for this ten-day Brahmōtsavam are outlined as below :

Day	*Morning*	*Evening*
1st	Golden *chapram* (canopy)	Simha-*vāhana* (Lion)
2nd	*Hamsa vāhanam* or swan	Sūrya-*prabhai* (Sun-vehicle)
3rd	Garuḍa or the Eagle	Hanuman
4th	*Sēsha-vāhana* (the divine serpent)	Chandra-*prabhai* (the moon-vehicle)
5th	*Mōhini-avatāra* (in a golden palanquin)	*Yāḷi-vāhana* (combined form of elephant and lion)
6th	*Chapram* or canopy—the deity is dressed like Vēṇugōpāla	Elephant-*vāhana*
7th	*Rathōtsava* or *Tiruthēr* i.e., car-festival	No procession
8th	No procession—only *Toṭṭi Tirumañjanam* (the deity is given a holy bath in a tub)	Horse-vehicle
9th	*Āḍum-pallakku* (swinging palanquin)	*Punyakōṭi-vimāna* (canopy)
10th	No procession—only *Dwādasa-ārādanam* within the temple	*Vattivēr-chapram* procession only around the temple

Historical reference to the Vaikāsi Festival

This ten-day Brahmōtsava festival has been going on in this temple for many centuries in the same order in which it is described above. An interesting epigraph of the 14th century A.D. enumerates the localities to which the image of the God may be taken on the days in which it is carried in procession on elephant, horse and garuda vehicles respectively. It stipulates that on these days, the deity should be taken upto Rangan Street. But from the day of the car festival on the 7th day, the deity should be taken upto the *Gangai-koṇḍān-maṇḍapam.*[30] The epigraph further stipulates four groves (*Tōppu*) *Sēramān-Perumāḷ-Tiruttōppu, Araperunchelvi Tiruttōppu, Senbagattiruttōppu, Rajēnadēvar-tiruttōppu.* This inscription should not be mistaken to refer to the genesis of the festival. It only stipulates the routes for the procession. The festival was evidently much older. The third day festival of Garuḍōtsavam is specially mentioned by Vēdānta Dēsika in his *Varadarāja-panchāsat*. Doḍḍayāchārya, who lived in the 16th century, has described the beauty of the Garuḍa festival.[31] Tyāgarāja and Muthuswami Dikshitar, the two renowned music-composers who lived in the 18th century, have sung ecstatically about this festival in their famous compositions beginning with *Vinatā suta* and *Srī Varadarāja* respectively.

There are many more references in the inscriptions to the grants made at different times for providing offerings to God during this Vaikāsi festival.[32] An inscription dated A.D. 1537 refers to this festival beginning with *Āḻvār-tirunāḷ*. An epigraph dated Ś 1493 (A.D. 1572) records the grant of five villages to this temple for con-

ducting this festival which is called as "*Tiruvaiyyāsi Tirunāḷ*". It gives minute details of various food offerings made on these festival days and to the distribution of the food offerings to the Srī-Vaishnava and other devotees beginning with *Ankurārpaṇam* and the *Dwajārōhaṇam* and ending with the *Viḍāyatti*. This epigraph refers to the various *maṇḍapas* where the procession was stopped for making offerings to God. They are : *Garuḍa-maṇḍapa*, *abhishēka-maṇḍapa*, *Timmarāja-maṇḍapa* and *Nambi-maṇḍapa* and *Gangai-koṇḍān-maṇḍapa*.[33]

It is interesting to see even today the presence of a number of stone-built *maṇḍapas* at various points on the road between the Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple and the *Gangai-koṇḍān maṇḍapa*, though many of them are in disuse now. Many of them have since been converted into shops or hotels.

Another important festival of this month is that of Nammālvār, the greatest of the Vaishnava Āḻvārs for whom there is a separate shrine in this temple. His birth-day falls on the *Vaisāka*-star of the *Vaikāsi*-month and so, happily coincides with the annual Brahmōtsavam. On the final day (*sāthumurai*), Lord Varadarāja is taken in procession to the Āḻvār's shrine to receive the *mangalā-sāsana* (benediction) from His great devotee.

Āni (June-July)

In this month *Kōḍai-utsavam* or summer festival is celebrated for seven days. On the eighth day the Lord is mounted on the Garuḍa-*vāhana* (Āni Garuḍan). As the birth-day of Periāḻvār coincides with this, the *Paratatva-nirnaya* festival takes place on this day. This festival is mentioned in a record of Sadāśiva dated A D. 1558.[34] It speaks of the procession of Perumāḷ and Periālvār around the streets. Another record refers to this festival as *Tirupallāṇḍu-Sirappu*.[35] The third important festival of this month is the *Jyēshṭābhishēka* of both the *utsava* images of Perumāḷ and Perundēvi Tāyār. It is conducted on the *Sravaṇa*-star. It is on this occasion that the gold covers or *kavachams* are removed and, after necessary adjustments are made, are again fitted to the icons.

Āḍi (July-August)

In this month is celebrated the *Tiruvāḍipūram* festival in honour of Āṇḍāḷ or Sūḍikkoḍutta Nāchiār for whom there is a separate shrine in the second *prākāra*. The festival culminates in the celebration of the marriage of Āṇḍāḷ, the divine maiden and the Lord. An inscription of the Vijayanagar times records provisions for offerings to Sūḍikkoḍutta Nāchiār (Āṇḍāḷ) on the occasion of *Tiruvāḍi-tirunāḷ*.[36] On the *Āḍi* full-moon day, the Gajēndra-*mōksha* festival takes place.

The procession takes place in the night and is confined to the four streets around the temple. But perhaps in the Vijayanagar times, the procession went as far as the *Gangai-koṇḍān-maṇḍapa*. An epigraph dated A.D. 1592 refers to the grant of a village for conducting the festivals in the month of *Āḍi*. During this time, the deity used to go to the *Gangai-koṇḍān-maṇḍapa* and after his return used to witness the *Agnistōma*-sacrifice.[37] A record dated 21st year registers a grant of village by the Telugu-Chōḍa chief Madurāntaka Pottāpi Chōḷan for conducting the *Āḍi*-festival.[38]

Āvani (August-September)

In this month is performed the *Pavitrōtsava* festival. Its object is the expiation of the sins of omission and commission arising in the daily worship and other religious rites performed in temples. It is essentially a purificatory ceremony. During this time, Srī Varadarāja is decorated with *pavitramālā* or purificatory garlands made of silk thread. The ceremonies included the performance of *Hōma* and *Vēdic* recitations on all days. It ends with the *Poorna-āhuti*. That the *pavitrōtsavam* was celebrated even as early as A.D. 1521 is attested by an epigragh.[39] The performance of this festival is referred to in a record of Achyuta Rāya dated A.D. 1533. It mentioned a grant of many villages for the provision of many important festivals including the *Tirupavitra-tirunāḷ*.[40] This is again referred to in an inscription dated A.D. 1537.[41]

Another important festival of this month is the *Srī Jayanti* or the birth anniversary of Krishna which falls on the day of the *Rōhini*. This falls on the 8th day or *Ashṭami* of the dark fortnight. The festival celebrates the birth and boyish pranks of Krishna. There are special *pūjas*, offerings, holy bath followed by processions. Next day is held the *Uriyaḍi* festival which symbolises the stealing of butter by Krishna. This game creates a lot of fun and frolic, commemorative of the playful acts of Krishna as child. An epigraph dated A.D. 1538 makes clear reference to the celebration of this festival. It records a grant of money by one Vada Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar of Tirupati.[42]

An undated epigraph of the Vijayanagar times informs us that the *Uriyaḍi* festival was conducted in front of the Hanuman temple—the place in which it is conducted even today.[43] An epigraph dated A.D. 1517 mentions that the main deity used to be taken in procession to the Hanuman temple to witness the *Uriyaḍi* festival.[44]

Puraṭṭāsi (September-October)

The grand *Navarātri* festival is celebrated for ten days in this month, when both Varadarāja and Perundēvi Tāyār grace the *durbār* or *kolu* in the hundred-pillared *maṇḍapa* in the outermost *prākāra* on the *Mahānavami* day, an *abhishēkam* or holy bath for the deities is performed in the *maṇḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine followed by a street procession. The festival of *puraṭṭāsi* mentioned in a 13th century record perhaps refers to this festival.[45]

An epigraph dated A D. 1530 evidently refers to the same festival and calls it Mahālakshmi festival in Puraṭṭāsi.[46] Closely following Navarātri festival comes *Vijayadaśami* which is considered as specially auspiciou for the commencement of any venture. On this occasion is performed the *Vaṇṇi*-tree festival. This is mentioned in a record of A.D. 1530.[47] On the *Sravana*-day of this month is celebrated the *Sāthumurai* festival in honour of Srī Vēdānta Dēsika of Viḷakkoḷi kōil at Thūppil, a suburb of Kāñchi. Dēsika is brought in procession from his shrine to the Varadarājaswāmi temple for worship. This is in addition to a festival for Dēsika enshrined in the temple itself in the *vāhana-maṇḍapa*. It is curious that none of the inscriptions mentions this festival.

Aippasi (October-November)

This month witnessed the festivals for the Mudal-āḻvārs and Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni besides the Deepāvaḷi. Perhaps in the Chōḷa days the festival for the Mudal-āḻvārs was celebrated on a more attractive scale. As early as A.D. 1129, we hear about the festivals in honour of Bhūdam and Pēy Āḻvārs conducted on their birth-days. A grant of the date provides for their worship on 13 days of every year on their birth-stars. On these days Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ was brought out and bathed with eightyone *kalaśas* or pots, and received great offerings.[48] *Ankurārpaṇam* a ceremony preliminary to the religious feast was also conducted. For this function nine varieties of pulses (*navadhānya*) are kept in nine vessels with water sprinkled over them so as to allow for the germination of the seeds. This function is believed to symbolise prosperity and therefore done before the commencement of any festival. Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni's festival is conducted for ten days in his shrine at the south-eastern corner of the outer-most enclosure. The final day i.e., on *Moola-nakshatram,* Lord Varadarāja is brought in procession to Mahāmuni's shrine and made to rest for some time, when many verses from the *Divya-prabhandam* are recited. Then both are taken together in procession into the inner precincts of the temple upto the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* when a picturesque ceremony takes place. After receiving the blessings of the Lord, Maṇavāḷa-Mahāmuni returns to his shrine. This old festival was suspended for 92 years from 1852 owing to sectarian disputes; but revived from the year 1944 under the judicial orders. Offerings and festivals in honour of Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni are specifically mentioned in two inscriptions dated A.D. 1555 and 1582. The former which belongs to the time of Sadāśiva records a grant by Parakāla Aḻagiya Singar for offerings to all the 12 Āḻvārs and some *āchāryas* on their birth-days. The *āchāryas* mentioned are : Tirukkachi-nambi (*Mrigasīrsa*), Emberumanar (*Tiruvāthirai*), Kūrattāḻvār (*Hastam*), Nāthamunigal (*Anusham*) and Peria Jīyar (*Mūlam*). Peria Jīyar was Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni whose birth-star was *Mūlam.*[49] The record of 1582 clearly mentions *Maṇavāḷa Mahāmuni-Arpasi-mūla-Sirappu,*[50] the festival conducted on his annual birth-day for which honours were sent from the main shrine.

Kārthigai (November-December)

In this month are celebrated the *Kārthigai* festival and the festival for Tirumangai Āḻvār. The latter falls on the *Krithika*-star. The Kārthigai festival was performed even as early as A.D. 1533. It was known as *Tirukkārtigai-tirunāḷ.* It is celebrated on the full-moon day. The temple premises and private houses outside are all profusely illuminated with the traditional earthen lamps. This is observed to propitiate *Agni* (Fire), one of the five elements.

Mārgaḻi (December-January)

One of the most important festivals in a Srī-Vaishnava temple is the *Adhyayana-utsavam* that takes place in this month for 20 days. The period of this festival is divided into two equal parts—the earlier ten days forming the first period or *pagal-pattu* (i.e., days ten) and the latter ten days the second period or *irāpattu* (in ten nights). The second half commences on the Vaikunṭa-Ekādasi day. Here in this temple there is no procession during the first half, namely, *pagalpattu.* On the *Bōgi* festival day, there is *Tirukkalyāṇam* or marriage performed for the Lord Varada and

Āṇḍāḷ. The *Adhyayana-utsavam* is considered as the very soul of a Srī-Vaishnava temple because it is a solemn occasion when the intimate relationship between God and His devotees—Āḷvārs and Āchāryas—is fully brought out. During this time all the devotional outpourings of the Āḷvārs are recited in the presence of the chief deity and all the Āḷvārs and the Āchāryas assembled in front. The second half (10 days) is devoted chiefly to the recital of the *Tiruvōymoḷi* of Nammāḷvār, the central figure among the Vaishnava canonised saints. At the finishing stage of the recital of the *Tiruvōymoḷi*, which marks the culmination of the festival, the image of Nammāḷvār is lifted and taken to the feet of the Lord to the accompaniment of the recital of the last 20 stanzas of the work which give a graphic description of how a released soul transcends unto Godhood. He becomes one with the Almighty; but some time after, the Āḷvār is re-granted to the world at the request of the earthly devotees for the redemption of humanity. This festival is marked by profound solemnity and dignity.

A record of Achyuta Rāya dated A.D. 1533 clearly refers to the *Tiru-adhyayana* festival and the grant of provision for the same.[51]

Another inscription dated A.D. 1591 records a grant of village for the purpose of conducting the *Tiru-adhyayana* festival in the month of *Mārgaḷi*.[52] It makes particular reference to the "*ulagamuṇḍa-peruvāyan-sirappu*" which is on the sixth day after the Ekādasi when the sixth canto of *Tiruvōymoḷi* beginning with the words "*Ulagamuṇḍa-peruvāyan*" is recited.

Besides this, the regular morning *Dhanurmāsa* worship takes place in the temple when Āṇḍāḷ's Tamil composition—*Tiruppāvai*—is recited. A special endowment was made in A.D. 1527 in the time of Krishnadēva Rāya for *Dhanurmāsa-pūja* and offerings for all the 30 days of the month.[53] On the day after the *Iyarpa Sāttumurai* of the *Adhyayana* festival, the *Anushṭānakuḷam* festival is performed to commemorate the incident in Rāmānuja's life. Varadarāja, accompanied by Rāmānuja or Uḍaiyavar, goes to the *śāla*-well (about two miles away from the temple) from where Rāmānuja is believed to have carried water to the temple daily. There is now a small temple for Rāmānuja near the well. On the return, the chief deity is dressed like a hunter (*Vēḍan*) as he once appeared to Rāmānuja. There seems to be a reference to this festival in an undated record of Vijayanagar king.[54]

Thai (January-February)

This month is famous for the *Parivēṭṭai* festival at Śīvaram, a place about ten miles east of Kāñchi and on the banks of the River Palar. Varadarāja goes there in the early hours of the morning. He is taken up the hill and stationed at a temple there. Thousands of people who gather from all neighbouring villages go up the hill and offer worship. In the evening, He is taken to the river and then back to Kāñchi. The reference to *Parivēṭṭai* in a record dated Ś 1470 (A.D. 1548) may be to the festival.[55] In the same month, on the Pournami day, the floating festival is conducted in the enchanting Anantasaras tank within the temple. The Lord and His consort are taken into a wooden pavilion which slowly floats and glides on the water. The pavilion is beautifully illuminated.

The festival in honour of Kūrattāḷvār takes place durtng the *Hasta*-star of this month. As the author of the famous *Varadarājastavam* and as one who was a close associate of Rāmānuja, he is specially honoured in this temple. Offering on Kūrat-

tāḻvār's birth-day is recorded in an epigraph dated A.D. 1555.[56]

Māsi (February-March)

Another grand floating festival or *Teppōtsavam* takes place in this month at Rājakulam or Rāyājee tank about six miles from Kāñchi. It takes place on the full-moon day. There are references to this festival in the inscriptions of the temple which mention it as *ōḍām-tirunāḷ.*

This is followed immediately by *Davana-utsavam* or Garden-festival for three days within the temple garden called now as *Dorai Thottam.* This is a festival for both Perumāḷ and Tāyār.

Panguni (March-April)

In this last month of the year is conducted the Panguni-Pallava Utsavam for seven days when the *sthalapurāna* of the temple viz., the Hastigiri Mahātmiya is read in the hundred-pillared *maṇḍapa* in the presence of Lord Varada.

In the same month is celebrated the marriage festival for Malayāḷa Nāchiyār for whom there is a separate shrine in the temple. This is held for a week ending with the marriage on the *Uttiram* day. This is a unique festival for this temple and it attracts a vast concourse of devotees who are delighted to witness the divine marriage on the auspicious day.

The performance of this festival in A.D. 1582 is attested by an epigraph of Srīrangarāya. It records endowment for offerings to be made during this festival which is specially called *Sērakula-nāchiar-panguni-uttiram-sāttumurai.* It also informs us that on that day Sērakula-nāchiar, Varadarāja and Sēnai-mudaliār were taken in procession to a garden named *Dalavāy-tōppu* where offerings were made.

Thus, it will be seen from the foregoing that the temple bristles with festivals all through the year. They have been arranged with great forethought and planning, so that many of them are appropriate to the season and weather-conditions. For instance, the grand annual *Brahmōtsavam* takes place in the month of May when the vast agricultural population has resting time; the *Teppōtsavam* or floating festival in *Māsi* soon after the rainy season is over, when the tanks would be full to the brim. Even though there is evidence attesting to the occurrence of the annual and a few other festivals in the Chōḷa days, it is clear from the inscriptional evidences cited above, that it was during the Vijayanagar times—from about the 14th century, the festivals increased both in number and grandeur. The rituals and functions in the temple also increased which correspondingly needed new types of structures like the *Kalyāna-maṇḍapa, ūñjal-maṇḍapa* and *Vasanta-maṇḍapa.*

Any description of the Kāñchi festivals can hardly do justice to their grandeur. The vast multitude that throng the thoroughfares and the temple premises and wait for hours on end to have a glimpse of the Lord, the great devotional surge that one witnesses in the emotional recitation of the *Vēdas* and the *Divya-prabhandams*, the *bhajanas* or singing-parties, the graceful march of the Lord from the temple to the *Gangaikoṇḍān-maṇḍapa* and back, amidst the milling crowds, all these scenes are to be seen to be believed.

NOTES

1. It is generally considered that the image-worship was not popular in the Vēdic period. Even the *āgamas* explicitly state that idols are a mere help though a very necessary one for the *sādhaka* (worshipper) to conceive and meditate on God. *Vishnu-samhita*, XXIX, 55-57.
   See also S. Dasgupta : *A History of Indian Philosophy*, III (1952), pp. 18-19.
2. V. Rangacharya, *Historical Evolution of Srī-Vaishnavism in South India*, The Cultural Heritage of India, *op. cit.*, p. 164, note 1.
3. H. Daniel Smith : *Pāñcharātra prāsāda-prasāda*, Madras, 1963.
4. *Jayākhya Samhita*, Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. LIV, Baroda, 1931, verses 8, 9, 12 and 13.
5. *S.I.T.I*, I, No. 424.
6. L.A. Ravi Varma, *Rituals of Worship*, The Cultural Heritage of India, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute, Vol. IV, pp. 445 ff.
7. This 'Tiruvusādam' offering is mentioned in a record datable to A.D. 1530 (*S.I.T.I*, I, No. 357, p. 333).
8. Interpolated chapter of the *Jayākya-Samhita*, verses 90-120.
9. S.I.I., III, No. 80.
10. S.I.T.I., No. 358.
11. S.I.T.I., No. 343.
12. *Ibid*, No. 346.
13. S.I.T.I., No. 372.
14. S.I.T.I., No. 343.
15. S.I.I., IV, No. 853.
16. S.I.T.I., I, No. 355.
17. 566 of 1919.
18. 566 of 1919.
19. 432, 446, 463 etc. of 1919.
20. 568 of 1919.
21. 508 of 1919.
22. 44 of 1893.
23. 489 of 1919.
24. *Satagoparandadi* verse, *Vedattin mun Selga...*
25. S.I.T.I., I, 357.
26. 401 of 1919.
27. 530 and 509 of 1919.
28. S.I.T.I., No. 370.
29. 585 of 1919.
30. 604 of 1919, S.I.T.I., Vol. I, No. 345.
31. See Appendix I for details of such descriptions.
32. S. I. T. I, No. 372.
33. S.I.T.I., I, No. 569.
34. 585 of 1919.
35. 657 of 1919.
36. S.I.T.I., I, 372.
37. 381 of 1919.
38. 419 and 432 of 1919.
39. S.I.T.I, I., No. 346.
40. *Ibid*, No. 406.
41. 422 of 1919.
42. 579 of 1919.
43. S.I.T.I., No. 372, p. 357.
44. S.I.T I., No. 391, p. 376.
45. 432 of 1919.
46. 646 of 1919; S.I.T.I., No. 378.
47. S.I.T.I., No. 378.
   The *Vanni*-tree (*Prosopis Spicigera*) is held specially ausipious, the worship of which would grant many boons. Rāma is said to have worshipped it before he started his search for his lost wife, Sita.
48. S.I.I., III, No. 80.
49. S.I.T.I., No. 390.
50. 479 of 1919.
51. S.I.T.I., I, 406.
52. 421 of 1919.
53. 439 of 1919.
54. S.I.T.I., I, 372.
55. 482 of 1919.
56. S.I.T.I., I, 390.

CHAPTER VI

FUNCTIONARIES AND HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT

The position of the temple as an institution providing work for a large number of people is a striking feature of the socio-economic life of the mediaeval times. Large temples afforded ample opportunities to the people of the locality to serve the temple in various capacities involving religious, administrative and other quasi-religious and manual work. We know that the great temple at Thañjāvūr had nearly 600 employees on its rolls in A.D. 1011.[1] The *kōil-oḻugu,* the chronicle of the Srīrangam Vishnu temple, gives graphic details of the various classes of the temple-servants and their duties.[2] Though no such written account is available for the Varadarājaswāmi temple, the inscriptions therein provide us with valuable data regarding this aspect. The temple employees are referred to by many general terms such as *kōil-parivārangaḷ, kōil-paniseivārgaḷ, Ūḷiyakkārargaḷ.*[3] A record dated 35th year of Kulōttunga Chōḷa III (circa A.D. 1213) informs us that there were 200 women (*padiyilār*) serving in this temple. They were known as *Tribhuvana-vīradēvan-padiyilār,* perhaps named after the king's title—*Tribhuvana-vīra-dēvan.*[4] The same inscription also informs us that these 200 persons were provided with lands and houses. Perhaps this was the general pattern followed by way of remunerating the temple servants. Unfortunately, the record does not give the details of the various servants and their functions. The true import of the numerous names and designations that occur in many other epigraphs is discussed in the light of the data available in the *kōil-oḻugu* and in the inscriptions of other temples. The history of the management is traced under a separate section.

The functionaries of the temple can be studied under three broad categories :

(i) those engaged in purely spiritual or religious services like the performance of the *pūja* or worship, chanting the sacred hymns etc ;

(ii) those engaged in rendering various kinds of quasi-religious, artistic and other manual work; and

(iii) those appointed to do administrative work pertaining to matters like the management, supervision over the staff, the maintenance of accounts etc.

Section 1

SPIRITUAL FUNCTIONARIES

(1) Jīyars

The most highly respected spiritual or religious dignitaries who were in charge of the proper conduct of the religious ceremonies, worship and other procedures were the Jīyars. A few Chōḷa records of the temple make pointed reference to the presence of the '*kōil-Jīyars*' though the exact nature of their religious duties is not

specified.[5] But we know from the works like the *Kōil-olugu* and the *Tirumalai-olugu* that the Jīyars were functioning as the spiritual heads in both the temples at Srīrangam and Tirupati from the days of Rāmānuja. They were the authorities in the modes and procedures of the ceremonies, connected with the worship.

The Jīyars were ascetics (*sanyāsis*). Usually, persons of sound knowledge of the scriptures and good character were selected for the Jīyar's position. They need not be necessarily celebates, but persons leading a normal married life (*grihastas*) were also often chosen. But after the selection, they should renounce their household duties and other material comforts and take to the ascetic life, dedicating themselves to the religious service. The Jīyars had their own *mathas* or monasteries, having a number of disciples who sought spiritual initiation and enlightenment.

From the records of the 15th, the 16th and the 17th centuries of our temple, we learn that successive Jīyars with the monastic cognomen Alagiya-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar functioned as the spiritual heads in this temple. They were known as the *Kōyil-Kēlvi-Jīyar* i.e., the Jīyar who was the *Kōil-Kēḷvi* or the temple superintendent, just like Vaḍa-Tiruvēngaḍa Jīyar was the *Kōil-Kēḷvi* of the Tirumalai temple, more or less at the same period.

The Jīyars held an important and honoured place in the temple hierarchy and their presence during momentous occasions attests to this. Thus, when the Vijayanagar king Krishnadēva Rāya specified the routes to be followed by the cars of the Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple and the Ekāmrēśvarar temple, the former was represented by the Jīyars, *Stānattārs* and the Accountant [6]

Many are the epigraphs which specify the shares in the *prasādam* (holy food) of the Jīyars. A record dated A.D. 1562 allots one fourth of the share to Alagia Maṇavāḷa Jīyar.[7] Whereas a record dated 1595 allots a share to the Jīyar equal to that of the *Stānattārs* and the Srī-Vaishnavas of the temple.[8]

The Alagia-maṇavāḷa Jīyars held an eminent position in the temple even as late as A.D. 1724 as attested by the copper plate grant of that date.[9] But, they seem to have lost their eminent position of *kōil-kēḷvi* in the wake of the sectarian disputes.

However, the Alagia-maṇavāḷa-Jīyar-*matha* is still there at Kāñchi and the Jīyar attends the morning and evening services regularly every day and takes part in the recital of the Tamil hymns (*Divya-prabhandams*) along with the Tenkalai *adhyāpakas* or reciters. During the festivals, the Jīyar takes a leading part in the procession along with his *prabhandam* reciters.

(2) Srī-Vaishnavas of the temple

Members of the many Srī-Vaishnava families did the duties of chanting the Sanskrit *vēdas* and the Tamil *prabhandams*. Many Chōḷa and later epigraphs mention them as the *Kōil-Srī-Vaishnavas*.[10] An epigraph of Kulōttunga III (A.D. 1178-1216) mentions them as the *Tiruppadi-Srī-Vaishnavas*, the word *Tiruppadi* meaning here "the sacred shrine".[11] From two records of the reign of the same king, we learn that they constituted an important body who entered into agreements with the donors, accepted donations and agreed to implement the provisions of the agreement. They anticipated the *Stalattārs* of the later periods (481 and 493 of 1919). Another record refers to them as "Perumāḷ Kōil-Srī-Vaishnavas".[12] They were entitled to get

a regular share in the sanctified food or any other special offerings.[13] A number of epigraphs of the 15th and 16th centuries frequently refer to the *Iyal-sēvikkum-Srī-vaishnavas* i.e., the Srī-Vaishnavas reciting *Iyal* or Tamil hymns.[14] An epigraph dated A.D. 1242 records the grant of 17½ *vēlis* of land to 58 Brahmins reciting the Vaishnava hymn *Tiruvōymoḻi*.[15] Another record refers to the Srī-Vaishnavas reciting the *Vēdas* and says that they were paid some cash also.[16] Even today, there is what is known as the *adhyāpaka-mirās* by which many reciters of the sacred hymns get a regular emolument in kind and cash.

In the 17th century, a few selected Srī-Vaishnava leaders received the honour of precedence in reciting the Tamil hymns and receiving the *Tīrtham* and *prasādam* i.e., holy water and food. It is known as the *aruḷappāḍu* honour which is being enjoyed hereditarily.[17]

(3) Archakas

The officiating priests who conduct the worship in the inner shrines are called the *archakas* or *Bhaṭṭāchāryas*. Now there are ten priests to attend to the various shrines in the temple by a system of rotation (*murai*). There are separate priests for the shrines of the Āḻvārs and the *āchāryas*. A record of the 13th century informs us that there were 10 *Baṭṭars* (priests) in the temple at the time.[18] The one who did service at the main sanctum was known as Periaperumāḷ-Nambi and the names of some of the other priests were : Karuṇākara-Battar, Dēvappirān Varadarāja-Baṭṭar. The priest attending to the Narasimha shrine was known by the general name Singap-perumāḷ-Dīkshitar.[19] The priest in charge of dressing the deity was called Singāra-nambi.[20] Some of the names of the priests occurring in the inscriptions are interesting. They are :—

(1) Srīdhara Baṭṭar[21]
(2) Rāmānuja-Gōvinda Baṭṭar[22]
(3) Aḻagiya-manavāḷa-Baṭṭar[23]
(4) Narasinga Baṭṭar[24]
(5) Vāsudēva Baṭṭar.[25]

As already seen, the interpolated chapter in the *Jayākhya-Samhita* lays down certain qualifications of birth and training for the priests of this temple.[26]

In the older times, the priests of the temples were provided with houses to live in and some lands for sustenance, besides a regular share in the daily food-offerings. Thus, a record datable to the first half of the 14th century registers a gift of a house-site and some privileges to a priest named Narasinga Baṭṭar of this temple.[27] Any donation for festival or offerings made special allotment of a share thereof for the priests. The practice continues even today. But now no residential quarters are given. Only a share in the food and some cash award constitute their remuneration. Money collected through the individual devotees and pilgrims by way of performing the *archanas* (special worship) goes to the priests. But on the whole, their income is poor and is hardly commensurate with the labour and time spent.

(4) Parichārakas

They are the attendants who render assistance to the officiating priests. They do various smaller duties like the supply of water for the holy bath and various other

sundry items like the incense, camphor etc., at regular intervals to the priest when the latter is engaged in performing the *pūja*.

These employees are referred to in an epigraph dated A.D. 1592 as the Sannidhi *Parichārakas*, the attendants in the shrine.[28]

(5) Viṇṇappam-seivār

They were the temple singers and reciters. According to the *Kōil-oḻugu*, they were known as the *Araiyars* at Srīrangam. They used to sing the Tamil *prabhandams* in front of the deity in a particular musical note, accompanied by the *vīna*. Sometimes, they would show gestures and act. Particularly, their swingsongs during the swing-festival (*Ūñjal*) and *Tiruppalli-eḻuchi* in the month of *mārgaḷi* are mentioned in the *oḻugu*. The *Araiyars* are still functioning at Srīrangam. We know from an inscription dated A.D. 1242, that there were 22 *viṇṇappam-seivār* of the Brahmin caste at the Varadarāja temple.[29]

(6) Tirumañjanam-eḍukkiravar (carriers of holy water)

This is a class of Brahmin employees engaged in bringing water from the river for the holy bath. On festive occasions, they used to go in groups and carry water in decorated silver or brass vessels for the anointment. They are mentioned in the two records dated A.D. 1536 and 1540.[30] The former record mentions that each of them was paid one *panam* per day as wage.

Section 2

FUNCTIONARIES FOR QUASI-RELIGIOUS AND OTHER MANUAL WORK

Besides those engaged in the purely religious duties, there were numerous employees rendering various kinds of semi-religious and other physical service to the temple.

(1) Swayampākis (cooks)

There was a kitchen or *maḍappaḷḷi* in the temple. An epigraph of even the 11th century refers to the construction of a kitchen (*Mahānasa*) in the temple.[31] It was meant to prepare *taḷigai* or food of various kinds to be offered to the deities The cooks were regular employees of the temple getting remuneration both in kind and cash. Their chief duties were, the preparation of food, making the cooked rice into blocks, and taking them to the various shrines from the kitchen. They are not hereditary servants, but are appointed from time to time. An inscription dated A.D. 1591 mentions the share of food to the *Swayampākis* from the offerings made by a donor.[32] Apart from cooking the normal quota of food for the daily offerings, the cooks have to prepare special kinds of food during the festival times for which they would get extra allowance in kind and cash.

(2) Viniyōgam-seivār (food-distributors)

These were in charge of distributing the consecrated food to the customary claimants as well as the ordinary devotees who have gathered for a particular service. There was one head for this class called "*Viniyōgam-seiyum pārupatyakārar*"[33] who

supervised the distribution and saw to it that it was made in accordance with the conditions in force. Probably he was responsible for making over the stipulated shares for various service-holders.

(3) Singan-murai (suppliers of fuel)

These were in charge of the supply of fuel to the kitchen. The fuel is frequently referred to in the epigraphs as *Erikarumbu*.[34] This service called *Singan-murai* is mentioned in the Tirupati inscriptions as well as *Tirumalai-Oḻugu*.[35]

(4) Srī-pādam Tāngiravar[36]

This phrase refers to the devotees who carry the processional deities within the precincts of the temple. This is not a fixed office, but it is often rendered as a voluntary service.

(5) Mun-taṇḍu-pin-taṇḍu-piḍikkaravar or Koḍi-kārar[37]

This refers to the labourers who carry the deities mounted on the big vehicles or *vāhanas* in the streets, outside the temple. Mostly the labourers did this difficult and strenuous work. The *vāhanas* are very heavy and are usually fixed to a large flat wooden plank. Large and thick wooden poles about 100 ft. long are tied to the bottom and lifted by labourers who divide themselves into four groups for the four sides. The terms *mun-taṇḍu, pin-taṇḍu* refer to the poles in front and at the back of the deity. They were paid daily wages in cash, besides food.

(6) Kodi-kuḍai-āḷ[38] (banner and umbrella-bearers)

This refers to the labourers who carry the banners and the umbrellas. There are special colourful banners, with the Vaishnava-symbols which are carried in front of the festival processions.

Similarly, one of the things for which Kāñchipuram is famous, is the making of huge and beautiful temple umbrellas which are carried on either side of the deity.

(7) Thēr-niminda-āḷ[39] (car-pullers)

This refers to the labourers who were engaged in directing and pulling the huge wooden car along the streets on the seventh day of the annual festival. The wheels are huge, about 10 ft. in diameter. As it is difficult to pull the car straightaway, persons were engaged in inserting long poles as an incline-lever behind the wheels and press it so that wheels would move and once they got moving, it was easy to pull the car. This term *nīminda* perhaps refers to this initial operation in starting the car. The car-pullers were given wages which is mentioned as *Vaḍam-piḍitha-kūli, vaḍam* meaning the thick ropes tied to the car for pulling.[40]

(8) Tiruvīdi-pandam-piḍittavan[41] (torch-bearers)

There were a number of torch-bearers in all processions both inside the temple and in the outer streets. A bundle of cotton rags tied around iron prongs at the end of a wooden handle and soaked in the gingelly or ground-nut oil and lighted usually served as the light or the *pandam*. It is called *Tīvatti*. A long metal rod was also used as handle. This is caḻḻeḍ by an epigraph as *Tirukkuḷāi-pandam*.[42] The wages

for the light-bearer are described in an epigraph as *Tīvatti-sumanda-kūli.*[43]

(9) Tiruviḷakku-kāran

This office is mentioned in an epigraph of A.D. 1572.[44] Perhaps, he was responsible for all the lighting arrangements in the shrines, entrances, outer precincts and the processions.

(10) Men in charge of crackers

A few persons were specially engaged in letting fireworks and crackers during the festivals. On certain nights there would be a splendid show of colourful lights and crackers. Such persons are mentioned as *vānam-suḍikkum-āḷ.*[45]

(11) Sculptors (Śilpis)

This class of artisans is mentioned as *śilpis* in an inscription dated A.D. 1571.[46] They were an important class of well-trained artisans, steeped in the architectural traditions and texts. Here in South India, this continues to be a hereditary family profession. In such a vast temple complex the need to employ this class is quite obvious. Besides structural additions or alterations, repairs to the existing structures must have been entrusted to them. One inscription refers to them as those who undertake repairs to the *maṇḍapas* (*Maṇḍapam Seppaniḍugira*).[47]

Now the sculptors or masons are not permanently on the rolls of the temple employees. But, formerly, they seem to have been employed regularly to attend to various constructional and repair-activities and special grants of lands were given to them.

(12) Carpenters

There were also temple carpenters to attend to various duties like the making or repairing of the *vāhanas* or vehicles, preparing the wooden poles to carry them, wooden pedestals, wooden handles for umbrellas etc., which were needed from time to time. The making of the huge wooden car with exquisite ornamental work must have involved considerable labour and ingenuity. This class is mentioned in inscriptions dated A.D. 1558 and 1572.[48] From the latter epigraph we learn that on the eve of the car festival the carpenters were in charge of seeing that the car was put in road-worthy condition and carry out any repairs, if necessary. Often, the carpenters were given lands named *Tacha-māniam.*

(13) Blacksmiths

The record dated A.D. 1558, referred to above, mentions this class of artisans as *karumārs*, engaged to do certain works in the temple. Their services were also needed in the preparation and maintenance of the wooden car and other vehicles with their vast network of bolts and nails. Besides, they had also to supply solid iron-blocks to be placed in front of the wheels of the car in order to stop it at various places from moving. This is specially mentioned in an epigraph as "*Tiruthēr Irumbu muṭṭi*".[49]

(14) Goldsmiths

Though there is no direct reference to them in any of the epigraphs, we can easily presume that they were of immense service to the temple. We get a number of references to the donations of costly golden and other precious stone jewels to the deity—like the golden *yajñōpavīta*[50] (sacred thread), golden *krīṭa* (headgear), *śankha*, *chakra*, *abhaya-hasta* (a covering over the hand set in precious stones).[51] All the deities were endowed with gold ornaments like necklaces, armlets etc. To make such jewels as well as renew and burnish the old ones from time to time, the services of the goldsmiths were required by the temple which perhaps allotted certain lands for the goldsmiths (*Taṭṭāra māniam*), as it was done in many villages.

(15) Bronze and bell-metal workers

Another important class of artisans whose services are indispensable for a temple were the metal workers who made a number of bronze idols from time to time. A variety of brass lamp-stands were presented to the temple.[52] Like sculptors, they must have also been in regular employment receiving fixed annual remuneration in kind and occasional cash rewards. They also prepared the bells and gongs in the temple used during the ceremonies and festivals. They also made the metal sheet coverings over the stone steps, *śikharas* and thresholds in the temple.

(16) Potters and Washermen

Both the classes should have been on the regular rolls of the temple-employees. Potters supplied the necessary cooking vessels and pots for keeping the grains, cereals, sandal paste etc.

Washermen cleaned the garments of the deities daily. Besides this, they had to supply the necessary waste-cotton or cloth for the processional torches.

Probably they were granted lands by the temple for their maintenance. Even now a special festival is held annually to honour the potters, washermen, barbers etc., serving in the temple.

(17) Pandal-erecters

Erection of *pandal* or shamianas with the help of dried coconut leaves on a vast scale is a special feature of all festivals in South India. Rows of bamboo or other poles would be erected or planted in the ground and over them cross poles would be fixed or tied and then the plaited and dried coconut leaves, each about two metres long, would be spread and tied. This would provide the necessary shade around the temple for the pilgrims. The edges of the ceilings of the *pandal* would be decorated with festoons, pendants etc. Probably a special batch of men attended to this work who were paid daily wages. An epigraph dated 1553 mentions them as *pandal-singārikka-āḷ-kūli*.[53]

(18) Garden-keepers and Garland-makers

Maintenance of gardens and supply of garlands and flowers to the temple was considered a pious duty. Periāḷvār and Toṇḍaraḍipoḍi Āḻvār spent their life-time in this sacred duty. We find in the epigraphs of the Chōḷa and Vijayanagar times a number of references of a class of people named *Dāsa-nambis*. Much of the garden-

service was done by them not only in Kāñchi but also at Tirumalai, Srīrangam, Srīperumbūdūr. A record dated the time of Gaṇḍagōpāla refers to the *Tirumālaichāttum Dāsa nambi* i.e., the *Dāsa-nambi* who supplies the garland. Numerous are the grants of lands particularly specified for rearing flower-gardens for the supply of flowers to the temple. The services rendered by the class are considered separately in a later context.[54]

Section 3

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF AND HISTORY OF MANAGEMENT

Even from the Chōḷa days, a number of administrative and supervisory officers worked in this temple to manage its affairs. The earliest among them were the *Vāriar* and the *Karanattān*, both of them mentioned in a record datable to A.D. 1155.[55] The former is explicity stated to be in charge of the management of the temple whereas the latter's dulies are not specified in the record. However, both are mentioned in connection with the responsible work of receiving and supervising the endowments made to the temple by the assembly (*sabhā*) of a nearby village. The explicit statement in the epigraph about the *Vāriars* is : *Aruḷālapperumāḷ koil Srīkāryam seyyum Vāriapperumakkaḷ.* This clearly means the great men of the *vāriam* who are doing the *Srī-kāryam* or the management of the Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ temple. From this record, it is quite clear that the *Srī-kāryam* was the office and the body of people called the *Vāriapperumakkaḷ* were in charge of it. Who were these *vāriapperumakkaḷ* ? *Vāriam* may literally mean a committee of chosen or selected men to execute certain works. Early mediaeval epigraphs of Tamilnād are replete with instances of the village-assemblies appointing a number of *vāriams* or committees to look after the special works such as the supervision of lakes, gardens, irrigation etc. Likewise was the *vāriapperumakkaḷ* of the Aruḷāḷappermāḷ temple, a committee of the village assembly, appointed to look after the management of the temple. Possibly it was so; but the evidence is not clear, especially because there is no mention about the *sabhā* or any other form of assembly in the inscriptions of Varadarājaswāmi temple. However, what appears more plausible is that Attiyūr, being essentially a small temple-village, might have had a committee of Great Men or Elders—*Vāriapperumakkaḷ*—to look into the affairs of the temple as well as the village. Such instances of religious bodies or corporations having quasi-public character are not unknown in the mediaeval South India. A similar case in point is a record of a temple at Uttiramērūr which mentions the transactions done by the *Vāriapperumakkaḷ*. Prof. Nilakanta Sastri, who has examined that record at length observes : "The phrase (*vāriapperumakkaḷ*) may mean great men doing *vāriam* and may only be another form of the term *vāriyar*; but it looks very much like meaning 'members of the *vāriam*' the last being understood as a committee. But it should be noticed that there is no reference whatever to the *sabhā* in this record, and possibly the *vāriyam* of this record had nothing to do with the *sabhā*."[56] So, we may not be wrong if we take the *vāriapperumakkaḷ* of our record to be a committee of elders elected or appointed by the village-people to look after the local affairs of the village as well as the temple which were closely linked together in multifarious ways. The conspicuous absence of any mention about any known form of administrative assem-

bly for the Attiyūr village *sabhā*, *Ūr* or *Nagaram* and designating the members of the *vāriam* as '*perumakkaḷ*' or great men or elderly men in the inscriptions lend support to this view. Indeed, in the entire gamut of the epigraphs of Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple, ranging for a long period from the 11th to the 18th century, there is no mention of assembly of the village anywhere. On the other hand, for the early periods we get the term *vāriapperumakkaḷ* and for the later period, the *stānattār* who were in charge of the temple-management. Perhaps, the latter people were the lineal descendants of *vāriapperumakkaḷ* and were in charge of not only the affairs of the temple but also those of the village as a whole.

It is interesting to find the slow evolution that the '*vāriam*' underwent. A record of slightly later period mentions that *Kōil-vārian* and *karanattān* received the cash endowment on behalf of the temple. A record of Kulōttunga III dated to A D. 1190 registers the receipt of cash by the *kōil-vārian* and the *karanattān* [57] A later record belonging to Rājarāja III (5th year=A D. 1221) records a gift of cash received by them.[58] The mention of a single official *vārian* instead of a body of men '*vāriapperumakkaḷ*' may well indicate that sometimes the executive power was transferred from a committee to one or more officials named *vārian*, or it may simply mean that *vārian*, as a representative of the committee, did the functions of a committee as a whole. Similar instances of the *vāriars* together with the *karanattārs* functioning as the managers of a temple which were till then done by a committee or assembly, are known to us from places like Sucīndram in Kanyākumāri District.[59]

Anyway, the record cited last which is dated A.D. 1221, is the last one that speaks of the *vārian*. After that they are no longer heard of. Instead, we see the emergence of a new group or board of managers or trustees named the *stānattārs*.

Karanattān

As mentioned earlier, this is one of the important officers of the temple mentioned in the early records. He was evidently the accountant and the record-keeper. In fact, the word *karaṇam* means document and obviously therefore *karanattān* was in charge of the drafting of the documents and the proper unkeep of the accounts. In the two records datable to A.D. 1155 and 1189, he is mentioned along with the *vāriars* as the authorities with whose knowledge and acceptance the endowments are made.[60] In one they are said to receive the cash endowment made for the temple. Probably, while the *vāriars* were the executive officials or managers, the *karanattān* was in charge of the maintenance of the accounts of all transactions. Later on, the designation seems to have been slightly modified. In the later records, he is designated *kōil-kaṇakku*, and invariably all the records of the Chōḷa and Vijayanagar kings, registering the temple transactions, were written in his presence and signed and authenticated by him. Almost every inscription of this temple thus ends with the words "*Ivai kōil-kaṇakku* (name of the individual) *Eḻuttu*" meaning that these were written by *kōil-kaṇakku* or the temple accountant. Incidentally, we get a number of interesting personal names of the accountants at various times. Mostly, they added the name Aruḷāḷapriyan[61] (lover of Aruḷāḷa) or Tiru Attiyūr Priyan[62] (lover of the sacred Attiyūr) to their surnames.

The accountants were probably not granted any lands because none of the inscriptions has any reference to that effect, but they were probably given remuneration in

kind, like paddy and also some cash. In addition, they were given a specific daily share in the cooked rice. Besides this in all endowments for festivals and other offerings, a special mention is made of the share of the *prāsadam* (consecrated food and other delicacies) to the accountant. This shows that they enjoyed certain special duties and privileges during the festivals and ceremonies.

In a record of Krishnadēva Rāya dated Ś 1439 (A.D. 1517) the accountant is called the *kanakku piḷḷai*[63] by which he is mentioned in all 17th and 18th century records and he has signified so in important documents of the temple. We know for certain, that till a few decades ago, the post was hereditary. The office of *Kaṇakku-piḷḷai* still continues under the same name.

Srī-Bhanḍārattār

Srī-Bhanḍāram was the temple treasury and those who were in charge of the treasury were known as the *Srī-Bhanḍārattār*. The large amount of cash and gold that accrued to the temple's credit through donations and income were deposited in the safe-vaults of the temple. Apparently, they were at first a merely receiving and distributing body; but later on, came to possess also administrative powers like selling of the temple lands on suitable conditions. Thus, while most of the transactions were approved of by the *stānattār*, a few which involved cash-gifts, were done by *Srī-Bhanḍārattār*, either all alone or along with the *stānattār*. For instance, in A.D. 1537, a cash gift of 80 gold *paṇam* was received by the *Srī-Bhanḍārattār* who agreed to utilise the interest towards certain offerings.[64] In this record, the *stānattārs* are not mentioned. On another occasion in A.D. 1537, in connection with the refixing of the temple's share from its lands cultivated by its tenants, the transactions were agreed to by *Srī-Bhanḍārattār* and the *Srī-kāryam*.[65] Similar instances are recorded in many other inscriptions.[66]

Besides the treasury of the main temple, there seem to have been separate treasuries for certain subsidiary shrines of the temple. This is borne out by a record dated Ś 1389 (A.D. 1467) which registers an agreement between the treasury of Tirumaḷisai Āḻvār shrine and those of the main temple.[67] The former purchased from the latter two pieces of waste lands and brought them under cultivation. From this, we might infer that there was a separate body of treasurers to administer the funds and charities of this shrine. Whether this was also the case with all other smaller shrines, we do not know.

Stānattār

By far the most important class of officers of the temple were the *stānattārs* who are variously called the *tānattārs* and the *stalattārs*. The earliest reference to them in our temple records occurs in two inscriptions, one of them belonging to A.D. 1234, and another datable to A.D. 1236.[68] Unfortunately, we do not get much information regarding the composition of this group, the mode of appointment etc. But, as mentioned earlier, they were probably the prototypes or the lineal descendants of the *vāriapperumakkal* of the earlier times and as such, included among themselves the select and the best qualified elderly people of the locality.

Dr. Venkataramanayya calls the *stānattārs* as the Board of Trustees and equates them with the *Stānikas* mentioned in the Telugu work *Amuktamālyada* (of Krishna-

dēva Rāya) as having been in charge of the Vishnu temple at Srivilliputtūr.[69] He says that during the Vijayanagar times, the *stānattārs* were mostly set up by the government and by private donors or local people. But in the case of our temple, there is no evidence of the *stānattārs* having been appointed by the Government. On the other hand, viewed from the context of the *stalattārs* mentioned in the records of the 18th century, it appears that they were selected by the local people, though the mode of appointment remains obscure.

Almost all transactions of the temple like the receiving of the gifts from the chiefs, kings or private persons or institution of special offerings or services, were done only on the approval of the *stānattars*. On behalf of the temple, they agreed to fulfil the purposes of an endowment.

In the records of the 17th and 18th centuries, the *stānattārs* are referred to as the *stalattārs*.[70] They continued to wield decisive powers not only in the administration of the temple but on allied matters also like the procedures of festivals, conferring of honours etc. The honours of "*first tīrtham* and *aruḷappāḍu*" were conferred by them on select and deserving people of the locality. Thus in A.D. 1687, the *stalattārs* conferred such rights of receiving the first *tīrtham* and *aruḷappāḍu* on one Gōvindāchārya, son of Prativāti Bhayankaram Rangāchārya.[71] Again in A.D. 1714, they conferred honours on one Kōnappāchāriar to be enjoyed hereditarily.[72]

Thus, from the inscriptions as well as later temple records, it is seen that the *stalattārs* of the temple were a powerful body of temple-trustees who were the supreme authorities in the temple administration.

Royal control over the temple

The presence of the king's representative in such a big town as Kāñchipuram both in the later Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar times, possibly acted as a check over the trustees. But it is well known that even in mediaeval times, the Government did not interfere with the internal affairs of a temple. The general policy of the Hindu monarchs to the religious institutions was one of non-interference. They protected and maintained the institutions by their liberal grants and did not undertake the actual management of them or interference in their internal administration, which was largely left to their own controlling bodies. But there was a general supervision by the local officers of the king, who were responsible for maintaining law and order in the land. If the king or his officer did interfere, it was rarely and in order to correct some local error or irregularity or to arbitrate in a dispute and this was never taken amiss. The temple-lands and properties were subject to the usual taxation and other regulations, unless explicitly exempted.

On the whole, the royal control was much less in the Chōḷa times when the temple establishment was not so large and its income limited. But with the increase in its properties, landed interests and the enlargement of the temple's role in the social and economic spheres, the royal control tended to become greater. Some indications to this effect are available in post-Chōḷa and Vijayanagar records of our temple. An inscription of the 13th century records an order of the local king Rājanārāyan Sambūvaraya to the *stalattārs* of the temple that they should follow certain routes and stop at certain groves during the processions of the festivals.[73]

Similarly, in A.D. 1517 Krishnadeva Rāya, the Vijayanagar king, fixed the routes of procession for the car festivals of Lord Varadarāja and Ekāmrēśvara. This he did in the presence of the *stalattārs* and Jīyars of the Vishnu temple and the *stalattārs* and the Mahēśvaras of the Śiva temple.[74]

Thus, except for such rare instances which called for the royal regulation, there is no reference to any unhappy or hostile relationship. Kings, viceroys and officials were given due honour and they are often mentioned in the temple inscriptions with all their titles. Special offerings were made in honour and for the merit of the kings and their officers. Whenever the local royal agent misbehaved, the temple-authorities appealed to the king. Thus, in A.D. 1529 during the time of Achyutarāya, when Vīra Narasimha or Sellappa showed partiality for the Śiva Ekāmrēśvara temple and allotted a greater share to it and gave less than the stipulated amount of land to Varadarāja temple, the *stalattārs* brought this injustice to the notice of the king. The latter, during his visit to Kāñchi, redistributed the lands equally between the two temples and ordered the documents to be re-written.[75]

The royal control over the temples was greater during the Vijayanagar times especially under Vēnkata. The appointment of a *Srī-kārya-Durantara,* a manager-general of all Vishnu temples around Kāñchi by Vēnkaṭa-II, is an instance of the increasing royal control over the temples. From the *kōil-oḻugu* account, it is seen that this appointment was resented by the local *stalattār* of the temple, because it was considered a sort of imposition.

The relation between the temple and the government during the days of the English East India Company and later, will be considered at the end of this chapter. We will now advert to the rise of the office of *Srī-kāryam* or manager and its impact on the temple administration.

The rise of the Srī-kāryam

The 16th century witnessed the rise of a new officer named *Srī-kāryam* to a position of importance in the management of the temple. Either to honour men of outstanding abilities and services or as a check over the *stalattār* this post of the manager was created. The first person to hold the post in this temple was the redoubtable Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār. A record of Achyutarāya datable to A.D. 1538 clearly mentions him as the *Srī-kāryam* of the temple.[76] We know from other records that he was in charge of the feeding house *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* attached to the temple. In addition to that he was also the manager of the temple. In this case, evidently in recognition of the services he and his predecessor had rendered to the cause of Srī-Vaishnavism, the *stalattār* themselves appointed him as the manager. They might have considered that his popularity and influence would attract greater royal favour and benefaction to the temple.

The next person to hold the post of the *Srī-kāryam* was probably Aḻagiya-manavāḷa-Jīyar. We have already seen that these Jīyars have successively held the post of the *kōyil-kēḷvi* or the temple-superintendence. Now in addition to the old position, Aḻagiya-manavāḷa-Jīyar is called the *Srī-kāryam* of the temple in a record of Sadāśiva Rāya datable to A.D. 1553.[77] In co-ordination with the *stānattār* he received certain gifts made to the temple and signed the agreement with the owner on behalf of the temple (*Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ kōyil stanattārum Srī-kāryam-seivār Aḻagiya-manavāḷa-*

Jīyarum).[78] It is worthy of note that there is not a single record in which the transaction is done exclusively in the name of *Srī-kāryam.* Always either the *stānattār* or in some cases the *Srī-Bhaṇḍārattār* are mentioned first.[79] On the contrary, there are quite a few records in which the latter two alone figure as signatories in the transactions.[80] From this, we can infer that the *stānattār* were still the ultimate authorities and the *Srī-kāryam* was at best a co-ordinate or executive authority.

Probably the post of *Srī-kāryam* continued to be in the hands of Aḷagiya-manavāḷa-Jīyars till the advent of the famous Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya. As already pointed out, this Tātāchārya family which was formerly in the city of the Vijayanagar and later migrated to Chandragiri along with the shift in the capital arrived in Kāñchi roundabout A.D. 1574.[81] It was in that year we hear for the first time the Tātāchārya figuring in the epigraph of our temple. Owing to the great influence he wielded with the Vijayanagar king Srīranga-I and his successor Vēnkaṭa-II, he became the Manager-General or *Srī-Kārya-Durantara* of many important Vishnu temples in, and around, Kāñchi. But it should be clearly understood that each temple had its own manager or *Srī-kāryam* as before and the Tātāchārya was only the manager-general, having overall supervision over them, probably on behalf of the king. He had no direct hand in the administration which continued to be in the hands of the *stānattār.* A record of our temple dated A.D. 1588 specifically mentions the Tātāchārya as one of the two managers—the other one was Sannidi Srīrāmayyangār.[82] From the *kōil-oḻugu* account, we learn that his appointment was opposed by the *stalattār* of our temple who belonged to the Tenkalai sect. But the Tātāchārya carried with him the Vijayanagar royal order (*ōlai*) exhorting the *stalattārs* to accept him.[83] Here, for the first time we get clear evidence of royal interference in the internal administration of the temple. But here too, it was marked by restraint and caution. The Tātāchārya had only overall supervision but no direct hand in the internal administration which was still largely in the hands of the *stalattār.* The temple transactions were still registered in the names of the *stalattār* or *Srī-Bhaṇḍārattār* as before.[84] The Tātāchārya effected his supervisory control through a number of agents, placed at different temples. His agents in our temple were one Visva-pundita and another Periatirumāḷainambi Chakkarayar [85] Similarly, he had his agents at Srīperumbūdūr. This again goes to prove only his indirect hand in the temple-administration. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the presence of such a strong and influential person as the manager-general acted as a check on the power of the *stānattār.* The Tātāchārya almost lived in royal splendour and could even, in one of his inscriptions, boast of performing eleven *tulābhāras* along with his eleven wives![86] Whether this could have been possible at a time when the Vijayanagar kingdom had already lost its glory as kings Srīranga-I and Vēnkaṭa-II were ruling from Chandragiri over a crippled territory threatened by hostile forces is indeed doubtful. But it would however be taken to show the general affluent position of the Tātāchārya which enabled him to do many beneficial acts to the temple like the re-coating of the *Punyakōṭi-vimāna* with gold, the construction of the *vimāna* over the Tāyār shrine, the presentation of many *vāhanas* or vehicles.

History of management in the post-Vijayanagar period

With the death of Tātāchārya's patron Vēnkaṭa-II in A.D. 1614 and the consequent

civil war which convulsed the kingdom, the Tātāchāryas lost their position as royal preceptors. Our inscriptions are silent about their activities. Though Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya's immediate successor figures in the epigraphs of Srīperumbūdūr and Tennēri, he is not mentioned in the inscriptions of this temple.[87] Here, the *stalattār*, strong as they were, seem to have re-asserted their power. In 1645, when Vijayanagar had ceased to be a power and the Gōlkoṇḍa army had marched into the Carnatic, the Tātāchārya family left Kāñchi for Mysore where they became the royal preceptors of the Mysore kings. But here in Kāñchi, one Darmayya of Kōtrapaḷḷi, managed the affairs of the temple in those troublous times. In recognition of his services, the *stalattār* of the temple conferred special honours and privileges on him in A.D. 1659.[88] The *stalattār* mentioned in the record are : Aḷagia-manavāḷa-Baṭṭar Varadayyangār, Aṇṇan Varadayyangār, Tiruvenkada Ayyangār, Saṭagōpa-perumāḷ-dāsan and the temple accountant Nallatambi Dānappa. The record clearly shows that the Tenkalai *stalattār* became once again a strong body.

The next landmark in the history of the administration of this temple was the appointment of Rāja Tōḍarmal as the *Srī-kāryam* or manager of the temple in 1710 by the *stalattār* in recognition of his yeoman service to the temple during a critical time in its history. Tōḍarmal re-conferred the right of managership on Āttān Jīyar's son (born before he became a Jīyar) as a hereditary title.[89] Thus, the managership of the temple was successively in the hands of this family for four generations and upto A.D. 1792. In that year there was no eligible successor in the family as the three heirs were still minors. One Mr. Rama Rao, a distant cousin of the female descendant, took up the managership. This was the time when the members of the Tātāchārya family who came back from Mysore in 1711 (soon after the troublous period was over and the restoration of the images was accomplished at Kāñchi by Rāja Tōḍarmal and Āttān Jīyar) pushed forward their claims to hold the management. The Tenkalai *stalattār* resisted it with equal force. As this was causing frequent breaches of peace, the then English Collector Mr. Balfour ordered Mr. Rama Rao not to perform the annual Vaikāsi festival unless the two parties composed their differences. But stopping the annual festival was considered extraordinary and inauspicious and so Mr. Rama Rao refused to comply with the orders Mr. Balfour, without going into the merits of the dispute, took an extreme step of advising the Board of Revenue to wrest the management from the hands of Mr. Rama Rao and handed it over to a new person. Thus, the hereditary management of the temple by the Āttān Jīyar family for more than 80 years (from 1711-1794) was broken. But the new incumbent held the post only for two years, from 1794-1796. Mr. Place, the immediate successor of Mr. Balfour, found him guilty of gross mismanagement and dismissed him. This led to the assumption of management by the Government of the East India Company directly in 1796 which continued till 1842.[90]

This was the time when the Court-of-Directors of the East India Company began to take a greater interest in the affairs of the religious institutions. The Board of Revenue which was established in 1789 and which was in charge of the organisation of collection of revenue also, managed the affairs relating to religious institutions. This was but natural as these institutions possessed properties yielding huge revenues. The Collectors were the agents in the districts and were not only in charge of the collection of revenue but also maintaining law and order, besides being magistrates.

Thus, by assuming such executive and judicial responsibilities, the Government consolidated its hold. These increased responsibilities led to the framing of the Regulation VII of 1817 which gave legal clothing to the functions already assumed. It defined the functions and powers of the Board of Revenue, the Collectors of the Districts and the managerial staff or trustees of the temples. The day-to-day administration was done by the Board of trustees or *stānattār,* as before. But above it, were the Collectors who were responsible for due appropriation of endowments, for recording lost properties, for informing the Board of Revenue about the number of endowments and to arbitrate in the disputes. The Board of Revenue had an overall supreme voice in all matters listed above. Undoubtedly, this period of administration was on the whole beneficial to this temple and protected it from many abuses like alienation of temple-lands etc. The ceremonies and rituals were allowed to be done as per established customs and the Government did not interfere in the religious practices.

But in 1841, the Court-of-Directors of the East India Company suddenly decided to sever all connections with the religious institutions and pursue a policy of disengagement. On 12th June 1841, they ordered "immediate withdrawal of all interference with the native temples and places of religious resort".[91] Their object was to leave the management of these institutions to a Committee of the people of the locality, qualified to conduct the administration. Thus, all the leading temples like Tirupati, Srīrangam, Kāñchi were handed over to the Mahants or Dharmakarthās or Trustees or 'Committee of native gentlemen' as the case may be.

In respect of the Varadarājaswāmi temple, applications or petitions were received from both the Tenkalai and the Tātāchārya families. Mr. Appa Rao, a lineal descendant of Āttān Jīyar, was also an applicant. He had stated in his application that he should be permitted to resume the management of the temple enjoyed hereditarily by his family for the past 80 years. Mr. Kumāra Tātāchārya in his petition had stated that one of his ancestors, the famous Kōṭikanyadānam Tātāchārya, was the royal preceptor of the Vijayanagar kings and that he had provided numerous benefactions to the temple and that therefore he should be appointed as the hereditary trustee. Mr. Arthur Freeze, the then Collector, after due enquiry and consideration, recommended that in the interests of the institution, it should be managed by a Committee of five persons, including two Tenkalais and a member of the Tātāchārya family in order to safeguard the rights of various classes of persons who had established rights in the temple. The Collector's recommendations were rejected. The application of Mr. Appa Rao, the descendant of Āttān Jīyar, was also rejected. Thus, the application of Kumāra Tātāchārya alone found favour with the Board of Revenue. He was appointed the trustee of Varadarāja temple in 1842.

The Tātāchārya family was in enjoyment of this right for nearly 100 years from 1842 to 1941. As already stated, it was a period when the Government pursued a policy of non-interference in the religious matters and hence, the Tātāchārya trustees enjoyed untrammelled powers. The Tenkalai Stalattārs complained that the Tātāchārya trustees took a strong partisan attitude and did their maximum to unsettle the established rights and practices of the Tenkalai service-holders and *adhyāpakas.* What these acts were and the reactions and results flowing therefrom, need not be detailed here. The Tenkalais, who formed the rank and file of the service-holders, had to

resort to the courts of law and vindicate every one of their rights. This was indeed the period most fertile for litigation. There was a general dissatisfaction over the administration even among a section of the trustees, who filed a suit for a scheme in the District Court, Chingleput.[92] Matters went to such a head that the trustees themselves had to admit, in the suit, the necessity for a new scheme. This suit went upto the High Court.[93] In the meanwhile the Tenkalais also filed a suit.[94] According to the new scheme, the trusteeship was vested with the five Tātāchāryas, one of whom was to be an executive trustee for a year by turn. Above this, was set up a Board of Supervision to supervise their work. The Board was to consist of a Tenkalai and a Vaḍakalai representative and one other member of the Smārtha or Madhva group.

But this scheme of 1909 proved to be a failure in the actual working, particularly because of the non-representation of the Tenkalais and the *stalattār* in the trusteeship. The Tenkalais challenged the hereditary character of the Tātāchārya trusteeship. The High Court of Madras in a Bench decision struck down the hereditary character of trusteeship.[95] On the basis of this decision, the Second Scheme suit filed by the Tenkalais was decided in 1941 and the executive management of the temple was placed in the hands of a non-Srī-Vaishnava to be appointed by the Hindu Religious Endowment Board.[96] Two members of the Tātāchāri family were designated as "Honorary Trustees".

It is under this scheme that the temple is now being administered by the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department of the Madras State through the Executive Officer who is a non-Vaishnava full-time paid employee of the Department. There is no doubt that the administration of the temple under this scheme is an improvement over the previous one. But the Executive Officer has to be vigilant and impartial in this temple, for any favour shown by him either to the Vaḍakalais or Tenkalais, would result in dispute. No innovation in the procedures is tolerated and no departures from the judicial decisions regarding the same would go unchallenged in a Court of Law. Thus, the work of the Executive Officer in this temple is delicate and difficult.

NOTES

1. S.I.I., II, 66.
2. *Kōil-olugu*, ed. by V.N. Hari Rao.
3. S.I.T.I., I, 346; 451 of 1919; 584 of 1919.
4. 417 of 1919.
5. 493 and 481 of 1919.
6. S.I.T.I., I. 387.
7. 443 of 1919.
8. S.I.T.I., I, 370.
9. *Ibid*, 429.
10. S.I.T.I., I, No. 396, p. 381; 451 of 1919.
11. 42 of 1893.
12. S.I.T.I., I, p. 383.
13. S.I.T.I., I, No. 353; No. 370 (p. 353).
14. 600 of 1919 (A.D. 1540).
15. 557 of 1919.
16. 585 of 1919, *Vēdapārāyaṇam Srī-Vaishnavālukku Dakshinai.*
17. See Chapter IV
18. 654 of 1919.
19. 614 of 1919.
20. 535 of 1919.
21. 373 of 1919.
22. 37 of 1890.
23. 535 of 1919.
24. 572 of 1919.
25. S.I.T.I., No. 359.
26. See Chapter V.
27. 572 of 1919.
28. 585 of 1919. Also see 585 of 1919.
29. 557 of 1919, *Viṇṇappam-Seyyum-Brahmaner kothu.*
30. 583 and 373 of 1919.
31. 473 of 1919.
32. 421 of 1919. Also see S.I.T.I. I, p. 342.

33. S.I.T.I., I, No. 372, p. 355 (A.D. 1521).
34. S.I.T.I., I, p. 346.
35. *Tirumalai-olugu, op. cit.*, p. 58.
36. S.I.T.I., I, p. 334, 374 and 584 of 1919.
37. 373 of 1919 (A.D. 1540).
38. *Ibid* .
39. 380 of 1919 (A.D. 1572).
40. 535 of 1919 (A.D. 1558).
41. 373 of 1919 (A.D. 1540).
42. 584 of 1919 (A.D. 1533).
43. 535 of 1919.
44. 380 of 1919.
45. 535 of 1919 (A.D. 1558), 380 of 1919 (A.D. 1572).
46. 561 of 1919; S.I.T.I., I, No. 369, p. 348.
47. 535 of 1919 (A.D. 1558).
48. 535 and 380 of 1919.
49. 380 of 1919 (A.D. 1572).
50. 430 of 1919.
51. S.I I., IV, No. 54 (dated Ś 1454=A.D. 1532).
52. 459 of 1919. This refers to the making of two-tiered, gold-plated, brass-lamp.
53. S I.T.I., I, No. 405, p. 392.
54. Vide Chapter VII.
55. 389 of 1919.
56. K.A.N. Sastri, *Studies in Chōla Adm.*, p. 102.
57. 554 of 1919.
58. S.I.T.I., I, No. 394.
59. K.K. Pillay, *The Sucīndram Temple*, p. 191.
60. 389 and 554 of 1919.
61. S.I.T.I., I, No. 357, 361.
62. *Ibid*, No. 353, 358, 369.
63. S.I.T.I., I. No. 368.
64. S.I.T.I., No. 376.
65. *Ibid*, No. 389.
66. *Ibid*, Nos. 390, 391, 392 etc.
67. *Arulālapperumāl Srī Bhandārattār Ikkōil-Tirumalisai Ālvār Bhandarattukku Silasasanam Pannikkoduttapadi*, 658 of 1919.
68. S.I.T.I., I, No. 349, *Ibid*, No. 345.
69. Dr. M.V. Ramanayya, *The Third Vijayanagar Dynasty, op. cit.*, p. 331.
70. 423 of 1919 (dated Ś 1609=A.D. 1687).
71. *Ibid.*
72. 425 of 1919.
73. S.I.T.I., I, No. 345.
74. *Ibid*, No. 384
75. 584 of 1919.
76. 579 of 1919.
77. 495 of 1919.
78. 526 of 1919
79. S I.T.I., I, No. 368
80. S.I.T.I., I, No. 342 and 358.
81. 383 of 1919.
82. 587 of 1919.
83. V.N. Hari Rao : *Kōil-olugu, op. cit* , pp. 183-185. The *olugu* says that with the same order the Tātāchārya went to Srīrangam and claimed certain special honours from the temple authorities who refused to comply with his requirements. The Nāyak chieftain of Madurai who was in charge of the Srīrangam by name Muthuvīrappa Nāyaka interceded on Tātāchārya's behalf but in vaint The Tenkalai *Stalattār* who were all-importan in the temple considered these unprecedented and contrary to the established practices and threatened to resort to self-immolation if they were forced to accept it. When the panic-stricken Nāyak informed Tātāchārya about it the latter said that the Tenkalai *Stalattār* at Kāñchi also opposed him first but later he subdued them. He went back to Kāñchi.
84. S I.T I., I, No. 368.
85. S.I.T I., I, No. 370.
86. 363 of 1919; S.I.T.I., II, p. 1358. Also see. Fr. Heras, *The Aravidu Dynasty*, pp. 305-306. for some more accounts about Tātāchārya.
87. See Chapter IV for details.
88. S.I.T.I., I, No. 388.
89. See Chapter IV for details.
90. The documents filed in the temple scheme suit—A.S. 212 of 1909 reported in MLJ-23, p. 134.
91. Court of Directors' Manifesto dated 12th June 1841.
92. O.S. No. 11 of 1907.
93. A.S. 212 of 1909.
94. O.S. No. 27 of 1908.
95. C R.P. No. 1355 of 1940.
96. A.S. 175 of 1934 (High Court, Madras).

CHAPTER VII

THE TEMPLE AND SOCIETY

Attiyūr is a neatly laid out village nucleating around Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple. Though in later years, many portions on its west, including the areas around the Vishnu temples of Tiruvehka and Ashṭabhujaswāmi, were added to make it the present bigger unit, named Vishnu-Kāñchi, the original settlement probably was confined to the four streets around the Varadarājaswāmi temple, besides a few more clusters of houses on the eastern and western outskirts of the village. It is indeed a noteworthy feature in Kāñchi city even today, that all major temples are immediately surrounded by streets, invariably occupied by the Brahmins. Thus, while the Śaiva Brahmins live in the immediate neighbourhood of Ekāmrēśvarar and Kāmākshi temples, Srī-Vaishnava settlements are to be found around Tiruvehka, Ashṭabhujam and the Varadarājaswāmi temples. Communal settlements were indeed the order of the day in the ancient and mediaeval times; only in the recent decades some changes have occurred towards a free mixing of the communities in the residential quarters.

Attiyūr, however, was not exclusively a Brahmin village any more than Vishnu-Kāñchi is today. The Brahmin villages were usually known as the Brahmadēyas or *Chaturvēdimangalams*. A *Brahmadēya* in mediaeval South India referred to the village where the rights of cultivation as well as supervision and control of lands were bestowed on the Brahmin beneficiaries by the donor who wished the donees to lead a religious life, performing the rites and ceremonies of the temple. Attiyūr is nowhere mentioned as a *Brahmadēya*. Though the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins formed a sizable bulk of the population, there were people belonging to the other communities who had landed property and who also had a lively interest in the temple. From the inscriptions of the temple it is gathered that many of the non-Brahmin residents too rendered numerous services in the temple. The Vellāḷa residents looked after the temple lands and cultivation; the Vaiśyas who were engaged in trade, small and big, have made enormous endowments for the offerings in the temple; the Dāsa-nambis were in charge of the flower-gardens of the temple; the *manrāḍis* or the shepherd-class maintained the cattle donated to the temple and supplied ghee, butter, curd etc., to the temple. Besides these, there were many professional and artisan classes like the stone-masons, carpenters, metal-workers, umbrella-makers, pipers, musicians, dancers who lived at Attiyūr and served in the temple. In fact, from the inscriptions of the temple we get a representative cross-section of the general population of the village.

Srī-Vaishnava residents

It is needless to say that the day-to-day life of the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmin was intimately associated with the temple. Especially after the impact of teachings of

Rāmānuja, the importance of the temple and service to the deity housed therein, assumed new dimensions. The emphasis that he and the *āchāryas* who followed him, laid on the *archa*-form or idol-manifestation and the value of *kainkarya* (bodily-service) to God in the temple, every Srī-Vaishnava deemed it his duty and honour to do one kind of service or the other to the temple. As already shown in a previous chapter, the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins were engaged as priests in various shrines of the temple, in reciting the sacred hymns in front of the deity, some in assisting the priests, some in bringing water for the oblutions, some in cooking the food for consecration. In short, at least one male adult of every Srī-Vaishnava house did some service in the temple. This was so in many villages of Tamilnād until recent times, when the other avenues of employment and the urbanisation had opened up new vistas. Even now many Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins who had to leave Kāñchi seeking employment in other cities, make it a point to be present in Kāñchi during the annual and other important festivals and take pleasure in rendering some voluntary service to the temple. The importance given to the conception of personal God imparts a spirit of local patriotism and Lord Varadarāja, for a Srī-Vaishnava resident of Kāñchi, is unsurpassable in beauty and compassion.

The Srī-Vaishnava community is composed of two sects – the Tenkalai and the Vaḍakalai. The former are greater in number and are to be found in the north, south and the east-*māda* streets around the temple. Leaders of the Tenkalai sect like Aḷagia-Manavāḷa Jīyar and Prativāti Bhayankaram Annangarāchārya, have their residence here. The majority of the Vaḍakalai residents are found in the Western Sannidhi street, the Ānaikaṭṭi street and a few on the south *māda* street (vide Map II). The members of the Tātāchārya family, the leaders of the Vaḍakalai community have their residence in the Western Sannidhi street, though many Tenkalai families like the Kandāḍai, Anantāmpillai etc., are also living here side by side. From the inscriptions we know that the famous Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyan had his residence as well as his *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* in this street. The Vanamāmalai-*maṭha* belonging to the Tenkalais is also situated here.

As already pointed out, in the earlier days, when the doctrinal differences between the two schools were confined only to the academic level, there were no social restrictions between the two communities. But in later years, when the difference pervaded to matters of social observances, daily domestic rituals, and other quasi-religious practices, the division widened, making it difficult for the families of the two groups to come together into intimate social relations.[1] Even inter-marriage among them is somewhat rare. Perhaps, nowhere else in the Tamil country, with the exception of Srīrangam and Kumbakōṇam, the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins are so sect-conscious as they are at Kāñchi. This place which was the centre of culture and learning has in the past two centuries become one of the worst battle-grounds of sectarian disputes centring round Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple and the scramble for control thereof. Very often, the annual festivals were marred by unseemly clashes, inviting strict police control and vigilance. In 1879 Crole, the author of the Chingleput District Gazetteer wrote :

> "Their (the Vaḍakalai-Tenkalai) disputes are even now carried on with much rancour and have frequently, in regard to the Varadarāja temple especially, occupied the attention of both the civil and criminal courts. The rival parties have, however, become chary of

putting themselves within the clutches of the Penal Code and their energies are now, as a general rule, expended in civil suits."[2]

Even during these nearly 95 years since Crole wrote this, the position has not materially improved. The civil cases have increased enormously. But the first half of the present century was marked by the appearance of a series of firm court decisions, mostly in favour of the Tenkalai cause, which have somewhat quenched the sectarian rivalry. Moreover, the members of the younger generation in both the sects, on whom the impact of the ritualistic approach has considerably loosened, look at the problem more rationally and have no interest to display the sectarian fervour.

Family groups among the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins

Among the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins of both the sects there are many family groups at Kāñchi. Some of the old and well-known families who are residing in the streets around Varadarāja temple are : the Prativāti-Bhayankaram family, one of whom enjoys the *tīrtham* rights in the temple; the Chakravartiar, evidently descendants of the famous Nallān Chakravarti, who resided at Kāñchi during the time of Rāmānuja; Kandāḍai family, descendants of Mudaliāṇḍān, a close associate of Rāmānuja; Tirumalai Anantām Piḷḷai family, descendants of Anantāḻvār, Rāmānuja's contemporary at Tirumalai; Vinjamūr family, who are the descendants of Aruḷāḷapperumāḷ Emberumānār, a chief disciple of Rāmānuja; Gomadattar family, one of whose members enjoys the *tīrtham* rights in the temple. On the Vaḍakalai side are : the Tātāchārya family, whose members are the descendants of Srī Śailapūrnar or Tirumalai Nambi, Rāmānuja's uncle; Naḍādūr family, descendants of Naḍādūr Ammāl etc. In short, representatives of many of the seventyfour *āchārya-purusha* families are settled down here, as in other important Srī-Vaishnava centres like Srīrangam and Tirumalai. While they did great service in the propagation of the ideals of Srī-Vaishnavism and a large number of disciples among the lower classes, a certain amount of competition for royal patronage, temple-rights ensued. Moreover, the conception of the *āchārya-purusha* cultivated in course of time, narrow loyalties, each member giving pride of place and importance to his own family preceptor—all these worked to the detriment of the solidarity of the Srī-Vaishnava fold with certain obvious repercussion on social life.

Endowments to the Brahmins

Brahmins were respected for their learning and religious life. Numerous were the endowments made in their honour and maintenance. During the time of Kulōttunga-I, a tax-free gift of land was made to a *maṭha* inside the temple for feeding the Brahmins well-versed in the sacred lore.[3] A Chōḷa record of later date registers a grant of 17¾ *vēlis* of land to 58 Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins for reciting the sacred Tamil hymns.[4] Similar gifts to Brahmins are recorded in the reigns of Kulōttunga-II, Rājarāja-III and subsequent times.

Sāttāda Srī-Vaishnavas and Other Classes

There were a number of non-Brahmin Srī-Vaishnava inhabitants at Attiyūr as in other Vaishṇava centres like Srīrangam and Srīperumbūdūr. They are commonly re-

ferred to as Sāttāda Srī-Vaishnavas both in inscriptions and literature. They were called so because they did not wear the sacred thread (*yajnōpavīta*), while the Brahmins who wore it were called *Sāttina-Srī-Vaishnavas*. But often they were denoted by the common name *Kōil-Srī-Vaishnavas*. One of the major reforms made by Rāmānuja was that within the framework of the Hindu *Varnāśrama-dharma* or caste-code, he liberalised the tenets and made them more acceptable to the common folk. The famous episodes in Rāmānuja's life, like his voluntary acceptance of discipleship under the non-Brahmin teacher Tirukkachi-nambi, his close companionship with Piḷḷai Urangāvilli dāsar, his propagation of the closely-guarded sacred *mulamantra* from the top of the temple-tower to all castes at Tirukkōṭṭiyūr were certainly revolutionary for his times and did much to popularise his creed among the lowly. He gave the latter a definite place in the Srī-Vaishnava fold by encouraging them to wear the *ūrdhva-puṇḍra*, to dress themselves like the Brahmin Srī-Vaishnava (with *panchakacha* lower garments etc.), and to recite and study the Tamil *prabhandams* of the Āḻvārs. He gave them important duties in the Srīrangam temple, which are followed to this day. He even went to the extent of admitting the *pañchamas* or the outcastes into the Vishnu temple at Melkōte—a remarkably bold act for his age. The steps undertaken by him to uplift the lower castes succeeded to a large extent in the strictly religious sphere but failed in the social sphere, for the steel frame of the caste system re-asserted itself. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the most distinguishing feature of Srī-Vaishnavism was its catholicity and democratic basis. Particularly, the *āchāryas* of the Tenkalai school like Piḷḷai Lōkāchārya championed the cause of the Tamil language and the Tamil sacred hymns and asserted again and again that for the true *prapanna*, caste restrictions did not matter. It can almost be said that the Tenkalai represented the anti-caste tendencies while the Vaḍakalai school championed the cause of purity of the Vēdic tenets. In fact, even the many episodes, cited above, depicting Rāmānuja as a friend of the lower classes, are considered by the Vaḍakalai school to be the creations of the Tenkalai school.[5] The Vaḍakalai school was scrupulous in following even the *form* and the ritual aspects of religion. But the Tenkalais held that *prapatti* or surrender would render all this superfluous. *Prapatti*, according to them, can be done by all persons irrespective of caste, community or status. They were even 'liberal enough to think the spiritual knowledge could be obtained through a teacher of the lower order, while the Vaḍakalais opposed such notion'.[6]

From the *kōil-oḻugu* account, we know that at Srīrangam, Rāmānuja employed a number of the Sāttāda-Vaishnavas to do various services in the temple for which they were paid regular emoluments in kind and cash. In the inscriptions of our temple also there are a number of references to the share in the *prasādam* allotted to the Sāttāda-Srī-Vaishnavas. Later, during the time of Sāḷuva Narasimha (15th century) Kandāḍai Rāmānuja-ayyan, a Sāttāda-Srī-Vaishnava, wielded great influence over the rulers of the land and the authorities of the temples of Tirupati, Srīrangam and Kāñchi. He had numerous Sāttādā-Srī-Vaishnava disciples in all the centres and he was chiefly responsible for providing many facilities and privileges in the temples. At Tirupati and Srīrangam, they undertook to supply incense, spices, perfumery for the daily bath of the deities and in consideration of these and similar services that they were granted a share of the consecrated food daily and on special occasions. They seem to have performed similar duties in our temple.

Vaiśyas

There seems to have been a sizable number of the Vaiśyas who were mostly tradesmen. They are called the *Seṭṭiārs* or *nagarattār* in Tamilnād. There is a separate Cheṭṭi-street in Vishnu-Kāñchi. Reputed as principal merchants, they had business connection in different parts of South India. They had mercantile guilds of their own which traded with foreign countries also. Members of this community both from Kāñchi and outside have lavished endowments for the various offerings to Āḻvārs and *Āchāryas* in the temple. Probably, they were responsible for constructing a separate temple for Tirukkachi-nambi who was a distinguished member of this community. In fact the earliest epigraph in this temple dated A.D. 1050 records a gift of an ear-ornament and sheep given by a lady-member of this community. Her name was Seṭṭi-Rājamāṇikkattār *alias* Vīranulambhadēviyar, daughter of one Ayyan-Seṭṭiār.[7] Another record dated 22nd year of Rājarāja III mentions the gift of 33 cattle for a lamp by Purusha-māṇikkaseṭṭi.[8] In A.D. 1532, one Kōnappa Seṭṭiār of Vannikha-gōtra donated 100 *pon* to provide certain sacred offerings.[9] In A.D. 1535, one Nārāyaṇa Seṭṭiār of Nedunkunra-gōtra gave 530 gold coins to the temple and stipulated that the interest accruing from it was to be utilised for various festivals of Āḻvārs and offerings to Lord Varadarāja when His processional image was stopped in front of Tirukkachi-nambi temple. He also provided for keeping a permanent lamp at the same temple.[10]

From the two epigraphs of the time of Gaṇḍagōpāla dated A.D. 1241, we learn that the oil-merchants, who also belong to a section of the Seṭṭiār-community, lived in a street named *Mummuḍi Chōḻa-perunderu* and another section of the merchants lived in the street named *Kuraivaniapperunderu.*[11] A record of 11th century A.D. found at Pāṇḍavaperumāḷ temple at Kāñchi registers a gift to the temple by a leading merchant named Peruvanian Devan Erinjodi *alias* Peraruḷāḷa-dāśan residing at the great street of Arumoḻidēvan at Kāñchi. The name Aruḷāḷa-dāśan indicates that he was a great devotee of Aruḷāḷaperumāḷ.[12]

Dāsa-nambis

They were an important class of Sāttāda Srī-Vaishnavas. They looked after the gardens of the temple and were responsible for the supply of garlands and flowers to the temple regularly (*Tirunandavanam-eḍuthu-tirumalai-sāttum*).[13] They were also called *Pundarīkadāśas* or *tāta-nambis.* A number of Chōḻa epigraphs refer to them as *Tirunandavanakkuḍi* i.e., those attached to the gardens of the temple.[14] They had a respectable place in the temple and were known for their dedicated service. Often they were exempted from paying taxes for the lands under their cultivation.[15] From a Chōḻa record of A.D. 1245 we learn that there was a head or a leader for this class and his name was Peria-Perumal-dasan.[16] Many of their personal names bear that they were after the presiding deity of our temple such as :—

Dēvapperumāḷ Tātan[17]
Uttaravēdi Aḻagiyar[18]
Garuḍen-mēl-Aḻagiyar[19]
Aḻagiya-Perumāḷ Tātan.[20]

Manrāḍis

The cowherds or the *manrāḍis* formed an important section of the population whose services were essential. Even in the early Tamil literature, there are references to their settlements which were called the *āyarpāḍi.* In the inscriptions of mediaeval times their services to the temple are often mentioned. They had a long tradition of tending cattle and supplying milk, ghee, curd and other milk-products to the residents of the villages and towns. The families of the cowherds today have their quarters on the eastern and southern fringes of Vishnu-Kāñchi. Some of the earlier as well as the later inscriptions of our temple refer to the numerous gifts of sheep, cows, buffaloes for the supply of curd and ghee to the temple.[21] Such gifts were entrusted to the cowherds referred to by their generic names—*manrāḍis* or *kōnars* who received them and agreed to supply a certain quantity of ghee or milk to the temple for the daily *abhishēka* and oblutions. A record datable to A.D. 1242 clearly mentions that the shepherds who received the gift of 115 sheep on behalf of the temple agreed to the condition that ghee and curd should be brought by them daily to the temple kitchen, measured with the temple-measure and supplied to the temple.[22] Another record gives us an interesting list of the different categories of cattle gifted to the temple. The cowherds to whom the cattle were entrusted agreed to supply one *ulakku* of ghee and one *nāḷi* of curd every day as well as on certain special festival days "as long as the sun and moon last".[23]

The intention of the donor in donating the different categories of the cattle was not merely to supply ghee or curd but also to foster and cultivate the cattle-population, which was necessary for the prosperity of the rural-economy. The temple, as the largest consumer of milk and ghee, encouraged the cattle-raising and dairy farming by having a large contingent of cowherds or *manrāḍis* to protect the cattle.

Some of the personal names of the cowherds found in the inscriptions are interesting. They show that they were followers of Vaishnavism. Generally, the cowherds were and continue to be Vaishnavas, as their favourite deity, Krishna, was himself a cowherd. The names are :

Āḻvār-kōn
Perumāḷ-kōn
Dāmōdara-kōn
Tiruvattiyūr-kōn
Varam-taram-Perumāḷ-kōn
Pēraruḷālan-kōn.[24]

While all the names have the unmistakable Vaishnava character, the last two are after the deity of our temple.

One of the interesting records of our temple informs us about the privilege of free grazing allowed to the temple cows. We are told that the cows and sheep belonging to this temple might freely graze on certain lands in a large number of villages in the Tonḍaimanḍalam whose names are enumerated and that no tax would be levied on them by the owner.[25]

Other than these Vellāḷas, Vaiśyas, Manrāḍis and the Dāsa-nambis, there were at Attiyūr people belonging to various artisan classes like goldsmiths, blacksmiths, car-

penters, stone-masons and sculptors about whom references were already made in the previous chapter.

Women

The position of women in the mediaeval South India was generally subordinate to that of men. Essentially concerned with the household duties, they were necessarily excluded from taking any prominent part in other activities. Even the women of the Brahmin class, though they shared some of the religious duties of their husbands, were debarred from the *Brahma-vidyā* or the *Vēdāntic* studies. They could not wear the sacred thread which alone initiated one into the *vēdic* knowledge. The study of the epics, the *purāṇas* and other texts was open to them, but not the *vēdas*. The Srī-Vaishnava women of the Tamil country have, however, evinced much interest in the study of the *Divya-prabhandams* of the Āḷvārs and the commentaries thereon. Many ladies know the Tamil hymns by heart, even though they do not recite them along with the male reciters. The ladies usually stand in a separate group during the temple service. Generally in all the temples of South India, the consecrated water and food would be distributed to them only after they are done to the men. All these clearly indicate the secondary or subordinate place given to them, though they were considered the ornaments of the house.

The inscriptions of this temple, however, give us the interesting information that ladies also took part in the chorus-singing in front of the deity. Thus, a record of the 13th century registers a special endowment by the Telugu-Chōḍa chieftain Gaṇḍagōpāla for the maintenance of the female chorists (*Perumāḷ mun pādum penḍugal Nimithathu*).[26] Another record datable to A.D. 1535 specifies a certain share in the holy food for the ladies who took part in the group-singing in front of the deity (*Tiruvōlakkam Sēvitha peṇgaḷ*).[27] But this practice is no longer observed now in the temple. The ladies are simply the spectators, while all the recital is done by men.

There are also quite a few other services which the ladies seem to have been doing in the temple. Duties like cleaning the premises, drawing *kōlam* or designs (in white rice-powder), cleaning of the cooked vessels, husking the paddy, cutting the vegetables and other sundry works are even today done by them, some of them voluntarily, and some for an honorarium. That the ladies had property of their own is known from a few gifts made by them to our temple. Thus, one of the handmaids (*agambadipenḍu*) of the Telugu-Chōḍa chieftain Gaṇḍagōpāla donated some cattle for a perpetual lamp to the temple.[28]

Female ascetics

The life of the ascetic strongly appealed to the imagination of the Hindus and the ladies were no exception to this. Though Vaishnavism was, on the whole, moderate in its devotion to the ascetic ideal, we do get many instances of ladies renouncing their wealth and taking to the ascetic life. Such female Vaishnava mendicants were known as *Koṟṟis*. They used to wear the basil garlands and other religious marks. There were a few such *koṟṟi* among Rāmānuja's disciples. In the 13th century, a lady by name *Pēraruḷālan-koṟṟi* made a will that 100 *kuḻi* of land purchased by selling her jewels should go to the temple after her demise.[29] Another lady-mendicant by name Tiruvattiyūr-*koṟṟi* donated cattle for a lamp in the temple.[30]

Courtesans

Like many leading temples of South India, the Varadarājaswāmi temple had this unique class of lady servants who were called the *Dēvaraḍiyāḷ* and were dedicated to the temple service. They were also called the *Dēvadāsis*. Their main duties were to sing and dance in front of God at specified time daily and accompany the deity in procession. Their public appearances were usually associated with religious festivals and they were generally experts in music and dance. We do not know when they were first appointed in our temple; but they are met with for the first time in a record datable to A.D. 1558. It records a share in the *prasādam* for *Thivaḍiyāḷ*, a corrupt form of the word Dēvaraḍiyāḷ.[31]

Originally instituted with the pious intention of providing dance and music to the deities in the same way the kings were provided, this class of women later on became the symbols of cultured ease and pleasure. From the epigraphs of the Chōḷa times, we know that they had a respectable place in the society and even rich people dedicated their daughters to the service of God. But in the Vijayanagar and subsequent times, deterioration seems to have set in in their moral standards which drew adverse remarks from many foreign visitors living in India. Emmanuel de Veiga, a Jesuit who witnessed a festival at Tiruvārūr in the Tamil country, recorded that there were 30 women dancers going before the deity and observed : "They may not marry but prostitute themselves for the most part, all goodly and richly arrayed and carrying lamp burning".[32] We do not know how far this characterisation is correct. Probably it is a superfluous generalisation; but there is no doubt that the *Dēvadāsi* system as a whole came to be considered "an undesirable institution which has outlived its time". Accordingly, it was abolished by an act of legislation in the beginning of the present century. Until this date, the *Dēvadāsis* were in employment in our temple, enjoying landed property and steady remuneration in cash and kind.

Temple as a patron of music and arts

Whatever might have been the defects of the *Dēvadāsi*-system, it cannot be gainsaid that the *Devadiyars* were good exponens of dance and music who did much to preserve the traditional dance forms for generations. The temple was the greatest single agent which extended patronage to them and utilised their services during festive occasions.

There were also musicians in our temple who are referred to as the *Vidwāns* or the artistes in an epigraph dated A.D. 1558.[33] Probably, during the festivals, they rendered classical songs in front of the deity. The *Vidwāns* included the *nādaswara-vidwāns* or pipers who are essential to the temple. Playing on the *nādaswaram* with its accompaniments is considered to be specially auspicious and so it is played in the temple during the early morning service and other services. The artistes considered it a privilege and honour to sing in front of the deity.

Similarly, architecture, sculpture, painting, bronze-casting and other arts received encouragement in our temple. The presence of the numerous shrines, *maṇḍapas* and the magnificent *gōpuras* should have given to stone and stucco workers, *stapatis* and *śilpis* ample scope for the exercise of their artistic talents and ingenuity. Today, the temple stands as a monument to the labour and the skill of the countless artisans and

artists who have worked there for generations to enlarge and embellish their house of God.

Temple as a centre of learning

This temple was also a centre of learning and education. In it were situated a various times *maṭhas* or monasteries which served as seminaries and schools. Thus, in the time of Kulōttunga-I, there was a *maṭha* named Arikēsavan-*maṭha* situated on the bank of the sacred tank of the temple.[34] It was the place where the Brahmins versed in the sacred lore congregated for discussion and recital. It was presided over by one Mahāmuni (the great sage) of Peria-kōil. The inhabitants of the nearby village granted lands free of taxes for feeding the Brahmins who studied in the *maṭha*.

Another interesting record datable to A.D. 1359 informs us about another monastery at Kāñchi presided over by Vaishnavadāsa *alias* Brahmatantra Svatantra.[35] The main aim of the *maṭha* was to propagate the tenets of *Rāmānuja-darśana* to the Vaishnava laity. From the record we gather that this *maṭha* had a good collection of books evidently in the form of manuscripts made by Vaishnavadāsa and other accessories of a library. The accessories probably included racks, spare sets of cadjan leaves for copying work and other scribal apparatus (*ivan tēḍina postakankaḷum idukku vēndum upakaranangaḷum*).[36] The pontiff of this *maṭha*, Brahmatantra Svatantra, was a profound scholar and disciple of Vēdānta Dēsika and his son Naina Varadāchārya and as such his *maṭha* should have been a great centre of philosophical and literare studies.

At about the same time, there was in the Varadarājaswāmi temple another *maṭha* named the *Vēda-maṭha* which was presided over by a certain Vedandrasāgara Srīpdā and which probably specialised in the teaching of the *Vēdas*. This *maṭha* was probably patronised by the Madhvas who were also Vaishnavas, but not followers of Rāmānuja. They were the followers of Madhvāchārya, the founder of the Dvaita school. From subsequent records of the temple we learn, that several leaders of the Dvaita school like Vyāsatīrtha and Satya Vijaya Tīrtha had evinced interest in this temple. The former who is considered the second founder of this school was held in high respect by contemporary king Krishnadēva Rāya. An epigraph of our temple datable to A.D. 1511 records that the Madhvaguru presented a village and the serpent-vehicle to the Varadarāja temple and instituted a festival in honour of king Krishnadēva Rāya.[37] Another record dated Ś 1649 (A.D. 1726) mentions that another Madhvaguru of Uttarādimaṭha by name Satyavijaya Tīrtha was honoured in the temple with certain privileges[38]

Another *maṭha* that was attached to the temple was the Aḷagiya-Manavāḷa-Jīyar *maṭha*. The Jīyars of this *maṭha* held important positions in this temple and they were outstanding scholars of the times. One of them is specially eulogised in a 16th century record as the ornament of Kāñchi and well versed in the Sanskrit and Tamil lore (*Ubhayavēdānta*).[39] The pontiffs of this *maṭha* were greatly honoured by the successive kings of Mysore in the 17th and 18th centuries. This is attested by several inscriptions.[40] The Aḷagiya-manavāḷa-Jīyar *maṭha* is still there at Kāñchi and continues to be a centre of religious and philosophical studies.

Temple as an agent of poor-relief

Feeding the poor and the deserving persons on the occasion of feasts and festivals, marriages and other ceremonies was considered an act of piety. The need for a rest-house for the travellers and visitors from outside in a pilgrim centre like Kāñchi is quite obvious. Even now such feeding (*Tariārādanai*) is done in private homes or through the agency of public institutions such as *maṭhas* like the Vānamāmalai and Ahōbila *maṭha*. But an important institution that admirably served as the rest-house with board and lodging facilities was the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa*. In earlier days the temple itself served as the agency to carry on the charity on account of the sanctity attached to it. It was easy for arranging to distribute a portion of the offered food freely among the devotees and the *dēsāntarīs* (visitors from outside the place) and also the local people who took part in some service.

But, towards the end of the 15th century A.D., thanks to the dynamic leadership of Sāḷuva Narasimha and Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyan, an important institution called *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* was established in many important Srī-Vaishṇava centres like Tirupati, Kāñchi, Srīrangam, Srīperumbūdūr. At Tirumalai, it is explicitly stated that the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* was situated in the Sannidhi Street and it was under the management of Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār. Here in Kāñchi also, it was situated in the Sannidhi Street under the management of the same person, who, as we have seen earlier, was put in charge of such feeding houses all over South India by the Vijayanagar king.

The keen interest evinced for patronising the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* by a number of devotees and the popularity gained for it through Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār and his successors are evidenced by the provisions made by these devotees individually for the delivery of the donor's share in each case of the offered food for the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa*. In all cases of food-offerings made to the temple, Kandāḍai Rāmānuja Ayyangār gave away his share to the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa*. All these and the royal grants sustained this free feeding house which did a useful social service. The institution of the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* is found even today in many pilgrim centres like Triplicane, Srīperumbūdūr, Srivilliputtūr, but strangely it is no longer functioning at Kāñchi. The residents of the Sannidhi-street in front of the Varadarāja temple are not able to even guess where the *Rāmānuja-kūṭa* was situated !

We have so far seen the pivotal role played by this temple in the social and cultural life of the people of the locality. We will now review the activities of the temple in the economic sphere as well.

The temple as a land-owner

Agriculture was the basic industry on which the vast majority of the population depended for livelihood. The temple as the biggest land-owner filled a large place in the agricultural economy of the locality. Right from the Chōḷa times, this temple had considerable landed property. Both royal benefaction and public patronage took the form of land-grants. The royal grants were of two kinds, one the *Sarvamānya*, whereby the entire village with proprietory rights over lands was given to the temple and the second type specified that all taxes, payable by a village to the

Government, were to be collected and enjoyed by the temple. The former category was also called *Dēvadānam* or *Tiruviḍaiyāṭṭam*. Epigraphs of this temple were replete with instances of gifts of both the types and it is needless to catalogue all of them. From one of the records we learn that the *Tiruviḍaiyāṭṭam* lands of our temple were marked with stones bearing the Vishnu symbol of discus (*Nāngellaikalilum tiruvāḷi-kalnāṭṭi*).[41] A number of villages in the neighbourhood of Kāñchi and elsewhere figure in the inscriptions as having been gifted to the temple. To cite only a few examples, Nīlagangarayan, an officer under Kulōttunga-III, gifted the village of Ārpākkam to the temple to meet the expenses with the daily offerings in the temple. A part of the village belonging to the temple was designated as *Peria-Perumāḷ-Viḷāgam*—the first name Periaperumāḷ referring to Lord Varadarāja.[42] Telugu-Chōḍa chieftains like Madurāntaka Pōttāpi Manmusiddha and Vijayagaṇḍagōpāla gave away a number of villages like Paiyanūr, Mavandūr, Vayalaiyārru and Puduchchēri.[43] They also made tax-free gifts of lands.[44] Gifts of villages and lands greatly increased during the Vijayanagar times. Achyutarāya donated the revenues of 14 villages sometime in A.D. 1529 for a big special offering in the temple.[45] Subsequently, in the same reign, several villages like Uttirasōlai in Damalkottam, Tirumukkūḍal (in Kalattūr-kōṭṭam) were assigned to the temple.[46] Similarly, gifts of villages are recorded in the inscriptions of later kings like Sadāśiva, Srīranga and Vēnkaṭa.[47] In Ś 1562 (A.D. 1640) four villages—Nedungal, Karumbakkam, Nambakkam and Surithil—were granted to the temple.[48] Even lands or villages in distant provinces like the Chōḷa and Pāṇḍyan countries, Andhra, Orissa and Mysore areas were granted to the temple.[49] Thus, roundabout A.D. 1230 Sōmalādēvi Mahādēvi, the queen of the Kalinga (Orissa) king Anangabhīma-III, granted a village Udaiyakamam in the Antarudravishya in the Orissa region.[50] In A.D. 1724, the Mysore king Krishnarāja Oḍayār granted a village comprising of 12 hamlets in north Mysore region to the temple.[51] But unfortunately, no accurate record is available for the total landed property of the temple or total yield accruing to the temple, in the mediaeval times or later. However, from the inscriptions, some of which were cited above, it is seen that the landed property increased considerably during the Vijayanagar times. Today the temple has wet and dry lands to the extent of about 275 acres in 12 villages which are under lease cultivation.

Gardens of the temple

Very interesting information is available about a number of gardens that were gifted to this temple in answer to the constant need for flowers and fruits for the daily worship, as well as during festivals.

Naralōkavīra, the renowned general of Kulōttunga-I, laid out a flower-garden (*Pushpavanam*) in which all the varieties of flowers were collected and donated for Lord Varadarāja.[52] Another record datable to A.D. 1316, however, gives interesting information regarding the flower-garden donated by the Kākatiya king Pratāparudra-dēva.[53] He provided 240 *māḍai* (gold coin) per year for the maintenance of a garden wherein the temple-garlands, fruits and vegetables for offerings should be grown. He constructed four lotus-tanks for the supply of water and appointed 20 gardeners for the maintenance of the garden. The names of the trees and plants grown in the

garden were :

Indian chrysanthamum (Javandhi)
Oleander (alari)
Large flowered jasmine (sādi)
Chempak (Champaka)
Mangoes
Pomegranate (Mādulai)
Coconuts
Lemon and orange.

Cultivation of temple-lands

How could the temple authorities manage the agricultural operations in the lands distributed in so many villages, far and near ? Obviously, they could not do all of them directly. Both direct cultivation of temple-lands by the agents of the temple and the system of leasing them to the tenants seem to have prevailed. In the former case, the supervision was done by certain local agents appointed by the temple who took every precaution during the cultivation and the harvest and saw to it that after paying all the wages and other dues to the farmers, the produce was brought to the temple. The procedure was that paddy or any other cultivated grain should be brought to the precincts of the temple and measured in the proper manner in the temple-measure. This procedure is stipulated in an epigraph dated A.D. 1259.[54] The agents were either appointed by the temple or by the donors. An interesting record of the 13th century informs us that when lands in nine villages were donated by an individual to the temple, the provision to appoint supervisors or *Kankānippār* in each village to look after the cultivation on behalf of the temple for which they were paid a remuneration of one *paḍakku* of paddy per day was given. Another officer named *Ārāindu-nirppān* was appointed to supervise the work of the *Kankānippārs*.[55] In this type of direct cultivation the labourers or peasants were paid daily wages in cash or kind and the entire proceeds went to the temple.

The system of lease also prevailed side by side. This would entitle the temple for the *mēlvāram* or owner's share of the produce which was usually 3/4, while 1/4 would belong to the tenant. This was the owner-cultivator ratio that obtained here even in A.D. 1535 as attested by a record of that date.[56] But the same record informs us that during a severe drought, the temple's share was reduced to two thirds, instead of three fourths in the case of areca, coconut and mango cultivation. In the case of sesamum, green-gram and sugar-cane, the rates obtaining in the adjacent villages were adopted. In the case of betel, plantain and other quick-yielding crops reared side by side in the newly planted areca and coconut groves, the *mēlvāram* was fixed at the older rate of 3/4. This might show that the temple-authorities showed due consideration for the drought conditions and other difficulties of the ryots by giving adequate concessions.

Reclamation of waste lands

One of the greatest services rendered by the temples was in the field of reclamation of waste lands by bringing them under cultivation. For private individuals, it would

have been a formidable task but a wealthy institution like this temple, with its men and money, could easily do this. Thus, in about A.D. 1467, the two pieces of lands at Tēpperumāḷnallūr which remained uncultivated on account of their non-irrigable high level were purchased as *Uḻavukkāṇi* by the treasury of the Tirumaḻisai-Āḻvār shrine in our temple and brought under cultivation and then leased for 200 *paṇam* of gold per year.[57]

Uḻavukkāṇi was the system of lease by which the lessee was given a permanent lease and authorised to reclaim a waste-land and grow the crops either wet or dry. He could enjoy all the produce but only pay certain taxes in gold or grain.[58] This gave the necessary incentive to the cultivator to work hard and reclaim a waste piece of land.

Irrigation facilities for temple lands and tanks

Apart from the seasonal rains on which the cultivation mainly depended, irrigation by tanks, canals and wells was prevalent. Lands near the Pālār or the Vēgavati rivers received supply from the canals dug from them. Wells served a useful purpose. A record dated A D. 1487, informs us that a Vijayanagar chieftain Virupaksha Dannayaka made arrangements for digging an irrigation channel in the temple lands and planted groves all around them.[59]

In about 1723, a water-supply project was undertaken and completed. One Rayar Sitakonnirayar, a deputy of the Nawab of the Carnatic, Sādat-Ulla-Khān, dug an underground aqueduct from a large tank named Sarvatīrtham to the tank inside the Varadarājaswāmi temple. The former is at the north-western end of Kāñchi town while the latter is at the southern end at a distance of about 3 miles. Provision was made to catch up the spring water percolating from the river-bed to feed many of the tanks with which Kāñchipuram is dotted. Traces of this ruined aqueduct are still seen here and there.[60] Crole who served as the Collector of Chingleput District in mid-19th century has paid a handsome tribute to the irrigation system of Vijayanagar days, traces of which he saw at many places. He says :

> "Many of them (irrigation works) now abandoned or in ruins, evinced the solicitude of those ancient monarchs for the extension of cultivation even in tracts not favoured by natural position or good soil. Almost every catchment basin, however small, still bears traces of having been bunded across and in many cases this was done in order to secure a few acres of stony ungenerous soil, to which all the fostering care of the British administration has failed to induce cultivation."[61]

Land-measures

The land-units mentioned in our epigraphs are the *kuḻi, kāni, mā and vēli.* Hundred *kuḻis* of land went to make one *mā* and 20 of the latter went to make one *vēli* which was the largest unit of measure. In other words, 2000 *kuḻis* went to make one *vēli*.[62] The area fixed by each of them was not permanently or uniformly fixed but varied according to the length of the measuring rod used. The length of the rod (*kōl)* used is known from such expressions like the sixteen-foot-rod (*padināraḍi-kōl),* twelve-foot-rod (*pannīraḍi-kōl*). The latter rod was used for reckoning the lands of this temple both in the Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar days. The earliest mention of this 12-

foot-rod in this temple occurs in an epigraph of Vikrama Chōḷa dated A.D. 1130.[63] Subsequently, it is mentioned as the standard measuring rod of the temple. In A.D. 1261, a new name occurs viz., *Nāḍu-aḷakkum-kōl.*[64] This need not be taken as a new type of measuring rod. The phrase simply means land-measuring rod and it is likely that it might refer to the already existing 12-foot-rod. In a 14th century record, the measuring rod was named *Gaṇḍarāgaṇḍan-kōl.* Probably, this was current in northern Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam area, as attested by an inscription dated A.D. 1390 from Tiruppālaivanam and another at Tiruppalakkuli in Chingleput District.[65] It is very interesting to see that this rod is carved to its full length with its denominations on the wall of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* of this temple. By the side of the rod, the label *Gaṇḍarāgaṇḍan-kōl* is carved. Perhaps this served as the correct standard length to be referred to in case of any doubt or controversy.

Scholars have pointed out that the absence of a common measuring rod for the whole empire, both Chōḷa and Vijayanagar, was the cause of great difficulty felt by the Government in fixing a uniform rate of assessment on land.[66] Under the British rule certain common measures like the 'cent' the smallest unit and 'acre' the largest (measuring 100 cents) came to prevail.

Land price

We get a few scrappy information regarding the prices of land. In A.D. 1073, during the time of Kulōttunga-I, a village-assembly sold 3 *vēlis* of land to our temple for 30 *kāśus* which was equivalent to the value of 30 *pon* of gold.[67] Probably, in circa A.D. 1254 the land-price went down considerably for it is reported that 7½ *vēlis* of land was purchased for only 25 *pon.*[68]

Grain-measure

The grain-measures that were in vogue in the temple at various times were the *kalam,*[69] *marakkāl,*[70] *kuruṇi*[71] and *nāḻi.*[72] These were of course prevalent in other parts of Tamilnād as well, but there were often local variations. From a record from Thanjāvūr, we learn that 6 *nāḻis* made one *kuruṇi.*

6 *nāḻis*	=	1 *kuruṇi*
15 *kuruṇis*	=	1 *kalam*

Another record stipulates 8 *nāḻis* for 1 *kuruṇi* and 7 *nāḻis* and 1 *uri* for one *marakkāl.* The generally prevalent denominations and their ratio can be given here :

2 *āḻākku*	=	1 *uḻakku*
2 *uḻakku*	=	1 *uri*
2 *uri*	=	1 *nāḻi*
8 *nāḻi*	=	1 *kuruṇi* or *marakkāl*
2 *kuruṇi*	=	1 *paḍakku*
2 *paḍakku*	=	1 *tūni*
3 *tūni*	=	1 *kalam.*

Probably, in order to avoid any confusion, the temple had its own standard measures. The *marakkāl* and the *nāḻi* used by this temple were named *Arianavallān-kāl* and *Arianavallān-nāḻi.*[73] They were used both in the later Chōḷa and the entire Vijayanagar period.

Another unit used for measuring the cooked food of the temple was *Aruḷāḷan-kāl* called after the name of the presiding deity—Aruḷāḷan.[74]

Liquid-measure

The earliest unit of liquid-measure occurs in an epigraph dated A.D. 1129. The measure mentioned was *Tirunārāyaṇan.*[75] The quantity it denoted is not known. Later on, the liquid-measure that was continuously in usage in the temple during the Chōḷa period was *Arumoḷinangai-nāḷi.*[76] It was evidently called after the queen of Vīra-Rājēndra Chōḷadēva, whose name was Arumoḷinangai. The earliest epigraph in which this measure occurs in our temple is the 11th year of Kulōttunga-III i.e., A.D. 1081.[77] Another frequently occurring liquid measure in the late Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar days was *Arianvallān-nāḷi*, which was evidently the standard measure used by the temple. From many of the records we gather that ghee or curd supplied to the temple was required to be measured by this standard.

Coins

The inscriptions of this temple furnish us with interesting information regarding the coins that were current at various times. It is well-known that gold-coins were issued by many of the Chōḷa kings. The *māḍai* or the *pon* was the standard gold coin of the realm and it was equal to one *kaḷañju* or 70 grains of gold. The *kāśu* was exactly half of this. The *madurāntakan-māḍai*, perhaps first issued by Madurāntaka Uttama Chōḷa, was current in the time of Kulōttunga-I and it is said to have been equivalent to one *kaḷañju* of gold or 9½ *māttu* or two *kāśus.*[78] From the time of Kulōttunga-I, many local issues made their appearance. Thus a gold coin named *Bhujabala-vīran-māḍai* is mentioned in a record of this temple [79] It was given as a gift to the temple by a chieftain from the Ganga-manḍalam who had the title *Bhujabala-vīran.* Unfortunately, nothing is known about the value or the gold-content of this issue, though we know that it was current in many parts of the present Chingleput District Still later, during the time of last kings, the Telugu-Chōḍa chief Ganḍagōpālan's coin was current in Kāñchi. It was known as *Ganḍa-gōpālan-māḍai* or *pudu-māḍai.*[80] In the Vijayanagar days, the coins which were current here were the *paṇam* and the *varāham.* The latter was a gold coin of the average standard weight of 52.7 grams.[81] An half the *varāha* was called *pratāpa.* The *panam* was 1/10 of the *pratāpa* or 1/20 of the *varāha.* In our inscriptions there are references both to the *varāha* and the *paṇam.* Thus, during the reign of Krishnadēva Rāya, the annual income from 5 villages amounting to 1,500 *varāhas* was donated to the temple.[82] From another record of the same reign, we learn that *paṇam* was also a gold coin.[83]

The temple as a consumer

As an institution requiring a variety of commodities and services for its day-to-day conduct as well as on special festive occasions, the temple was the biggest consumer of the locality. In the early stages, the requirements of the temple were probably few; some rice for offerings, flowers, sandal, milk, ghee and oil for lamp etc., were all that were required. The steady increase in the offerings, festivals, and rituals from about 13th century A.D. resulted in the increase of the articles required by the temple

manifold. Perhaps in no other temple do we get such graphic details about the articles used by the temple and their various proportions for preparing different kinds of food-offerings as we do in the numerous Vijayanagar records of this temple.[84] The items constantly required by the temple were : rice, gram, pulses, turmeric, pepper, mustard, jaggery, salt, areca-nuts, betel, camphor, kumkum, coconut, fruits, milk, ghee, butter, curd, oil, honey. Different items of vegetables are mentioned in a record dated Ś 1514 (A.D. 1592).[85]

Not only in the food-articles and the perfumery, but in other articles like cloth, wooden objects, jewels, gold, silver and brass, metal lamps, decorative articles and the like, the temple was and still continues to be the biggest consumer in the locality. In this way, the temple stimulated and encouraged local trade and industry.

Thus, from the foregoing account it is seen that Varadarājaswāmi temple filled a large place in the social and economic life of the people of Attiyūr and Kāñchi. Thanks to the rich benefactions in the later Chōḷa and the Vijayanagar days the temple reached a point of affluence and glory from about the 13th century. It gave employment to numerous priests, servants of various categories, hymnists, musicians, dancing girls. It also patronised the learned and the cultured. In short, it is no exaggeration to say that the temple gathered round itself all that was best in arts of civilized existence. The temple played a leading and constructive role for the larger social and moral well-being of the people.

NOTES

1. For a full discussion on the socio-religious practices of the two sects of the Srī-Vaishnava Brahmins, see K. Rangachari : *The Srī-Vaishnava Brahmanas* (Madras, 1931).
2. Crole, *op. cit* , p. 32.
3. 635 of 1919.
4. 557 of 1919.
5. V. Rangacharya : *'Historical Evolution of Srī-Vaishnavism in South India', op. cit.*, p. 176.
6. T.V. Mahalingam : *Administration and Social Life under the Vijayanagar*, pp. 176 and 311.
7. 519 of 1919.
8. 368 of 1919.
9. 472 of 1919.
10. 583 of 1919.
11. 607 and 609 of 1919.
12. S.I.I., pp. 140-143.
13. 571 of 1919.
14. 557, 642, 608 of 1919.
15. 637 of 1919.
16. 400, 557 of 1919.
17. 566 of 1919.
18. 618 of 1919.
19. *Ibid.*
20. 566 of 1919
21. S.I.T.I., I, Nos. 367, 373, 383, 394, 395, 396, 416 etc.
22. *Nāl onrukku Tirumadaipalliyil Alakkum Ariyanavallān nāliyal Nei ulakkum, Tayiramudu-nāliyum* (551 of 1919).
23. S.I.T.I , I, 356.
24. S I.T.I., I, 401, 412, 414, 598 and 400.
25. 623 of 1919.
26. S.I.T.I., I, 393.
27. 535 of 1919.
28. 570 of 1919.
29. 431 of 1919.
30. 388 of 1919.
31. 535 of 1919.
32. Quoted by T.V. Mahalingam · *Administration and Social Life under the Vijayanagar*, p. 269.
33. 535 of 1919.
34. 635 of 1919.
35. Ep. Ind. XXV, No. 34. Also see Chapter IV above.
36. *Ibid*, p. 320.
37. 370 of 1919.
38. 377 of 1919.
39. S.I.T.I., I, No. 432.
40. Ep. Car. III, Sri. 100; S.I.T.I., I, 429. Also see Hayavadana Rao : *History of Mysore*, Vol. I, pp. 329-331; Vol. II, pp. 29-33.
41. S.I.T.I., I, No. 355.
42. 361 of 1919.
43. 434 and 461 of 1919.

44. 438 of 1917.
45. S.I.T.I., I, 357.
46. *Ibid*, Nos. 406, 358; 575 of 1919.
47. 443, 482, 507, 535, 592 of 1919; 588 and 380 of 1919 and 502 of 1919.
48. 443 of 1919.
49. 427, 441 (Pandya); 457 (Mysore) of 1919.
50. 444 of 1919.
51. S.I.T.I., I, No. 429.
52. 473 of 1919.
53. Ep. Ind. VII, pp. 128-132.
54. 428 of 1919.
55. 441 of 1919.
56. 655 of 1919; A.R.E. 1920, para 48.
57. 658 of 1919.
58. 648 of 1919.
59. S.I.T.I., I, 348.
60. A R.E. 1920, p. 123.
61. C.S. Crole, *Chingleput District Manual*, p. 209.
62. This is in accordance with the ratio given in inscriptions of Thanjavur and Chingleput areas (A. Appadurai, *Economic Conditions of S. India*, I, p. 405).
63. 520 of 1919.
64. 483 of 1919.
65. 357 of 1928 and 212 of 1916.
66. K.A.N. Sastri : *Chōlas*, p. 528; T.V. Mahalingam : *Administration and Social Life under the Vijayanagar*, p. 47.
67. 522 of 1919.
68. 565 of 1919.
69. S.I.I., III, No. 80 (A.D. 1129).
70. S.I.T.I., I, No. 359.
71. *Ibid*, No. 377.
72. 560 of 1919.
73. S I I., IV, No. 361.
74. 507 of 1919, *Arulalan-kalal-amudupadi.*
75. 436 of 1919.
76. S.I.T.I., I, No. 349 and also No. 367.
77. 554 of 1919.
78. K.A.N. Sastri : *A History of S. India* (1958), p. 328.
79. 48 of 1893; 453 and 360 of 1919.
80. 428, 385 of 1919.
81. *Vijayanagara Sexcentenary Volume* (1935), p. 225.
82. 474 of 1919.
83. 512 of 1919.
84. For instance refer S.I.T.I., I, No. 349.
85. S.I.T.I., I, 368.

CHAPTER VIII

ARCHITECTURE

General features

This chapter is complementary to Chapter III wherein a fairly detailed description of the various shrines, *maṇḍapas* and other structures of this temple is given. The disposition of the shrines, as also their probable origin based mainly on the epigraphical and literary sources were indicated. Architectural features were briefly cited as corroborative evidence. In this chapter attention is focussed on structural details of the temple and its constituents. This temple is important for such a study because it preserves the different architectural and stylistic patterns that were in vogue at different epochs in the Tamil country. We are indeed fortunate to have a good number of structures in the temple which are specifically datable. They give us the prevailing norms of construction and style. They serve as landmarks in architectural evolution and provide us with the necessary data for comparison with architectural details of the undated structures and for fixing the date of the latter.

We have already outlined four stages of development of this temple-complex (Chapter III). Leaving out the first stage for which there are no structural vestiges left, we find the next three stages that can be taken as representing three phases in the evolution of the style as well. The second stage which coincides with the times of the Chōḷa kings Rājādhirāja-I, Kulōttunga-I was the most formative stage as far as this temple is concerned, for it witnessed a thorough reconstruction of a modest temple into a bigger complex. It started by about the middle of the 11th century A.D. Most probably, the present sanctum-complex over the 'hill' and the Narasimha shrine down below, were the earliest to be built, and this took place sometime during the reign of Rājādirāja-I. This is well attested by the presence of the latter's inscription in the Narasimha shrine. Probably a little later, sometime before A.D. 1073 and during the reign of Kulōttuga-I, was built the second enclosure-wall with its central gateway on the west. Slightly later, but during the reign of the same king, the third enclosure was also constructed with its central gateway. Thus, the reigns of Rājādhirāja-I and Kulōttunga-I roughly occupying a period of a little more than 100 years from A.D. 1018-1120 witnessed the most remarkable structural improvement in the temple. The structures that rose up during this period are essentially rooted in the orthodox, well-developed Chōḷa pattern with their plain spaces and simple designs. They can indeed be said to belong to the middle Chōḷa phase as we see in them the continuation of the characteristics of the mature or the imperial Chōḷa style, as exemplified in the temples of Brihadīśvara at Thañjāvūr and Gangaikoṇḍachōḷapuram.[1] No doubt certain new features were introduced even during the reign of Kulōttunga-I, but as far as this temple is concerned, we

find the structures of these times retaining the middle Chōḷa style in all their essentials. The structures are massive in proportions and austere in appearance. They have short and squattish pillars and pilasters made up of two *sadurams* or squares at the two ends and an octagonal middle. They have heavy corbels or *pōdikai* with bevelled end and angular profile, having tenon-like projection. The square and thick abacus (*palagai*) has also a plain doucene on its underside which was rarely scalloped. Entrance-*gōpuras* were always broad and squattish so as not to dwarf the stature of the central shrine. This principle was admirably kept up in our temple as the central sanctum situated on an elevated platform (hill) still dominates the entire composition.

The second stage in the growth of the temple coincides with the reigns of the later Chōḷa kings beginning with Vikrama Chōḷa-I. This would roughly, though not exactly, coincide with the period indicated by Dubrueil between 1100-1350[2] Here we see some new traits or features in the pattern of the pillars, pilasters and corbels making their appearance which later on became well developed and attained full consummation during the Vijayanagar times. This traditional stage is well represented in this temple by many shrines like the Kariamāṇikaperumāḷ shrine, Anantāḻvār shrine, Krishna shrine and the *Abhishēka-maṇḍapa*. We see in them the presence of the earlier features as well as the emergence of new ones. Here, we see the pillar-corbels taking the form of a moulded campanulate pendant, tending to become floral and anticipating the incipient *madalai* of the *pushpa-pōtika* (lotus-bud), characteristic of the Vijayanagar style. The abacus (*palagai*) of the capital is not only thinner in contrast to the large and thick ones of the earlier Chōḷa times but also becomes scalloped. Deep niches with sculptures and topped by a massive-Chōḷa ornamental *tōrana*, common in the early and middle-Chōḷa temples, seldom appear on the wall-portions of the shrines. Instead, only shallow niches without sculptures and with the constricted *tōrana* in low relief are found. All these peculiar traits in plan and the elevation of the shrines and the *maṇḍapas* will be discussed in detail in the sequel. Figure 40 clearly indicates the changing stylistic features.

In the succeeding Vijayanagar period, the temple witnessed greater constructional activity and some of the buildings are remarkable for the great size of their component structures—*maṇḍapas* and *gōpuras*. During this phase, increased importance was given to the growth of the temple precincts and the ancillary structures. There was considerable increase in the temple-rituals and festivals and, correspondingly new structures like the *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*, the *tulābhāra-maṇḍapa*, the *ūñjal-maṇḍapa* and the *vasanta-maṇḍapa* had to be built. The *gōpuram* or towering gateway also came to occupy a more prominent position in this temple-scheme and became so imposing as to completely dwarf the main sanctum. The embellishments of the *adhisṭāna* mouldings, pillars, ceilings, towers etc., became markedly rich and varied and the decorative treatment excelled all previous attempts. The shafts of the pillars and pilasters became more ornamental with the former. The lower part of the abacus or *pāḷi* which was somewhat scalloped into petals in the early and late Chōḷa times assumed a more pronounced floral form with the petals or *idaḷ* of the *Padma*, the corbel which was an incipient pendant evolved into the characteristic *pushpa-pōtika*, with a double-flexed arm extending from the main block and scallop-

ed at the free-hanging extremity into the everted petals with a small bud or torus hanging at the centre. The pillared halls such as the *kalyāna-maṇḍapa*, the *ūñjal-maṇḍapa* and the *vāhana-maṇḍapa* in this temple which belong to this period are noted for their minute carvings and extravagant embellishment characteristic of the style. The intricately worked colonnade, often with attached small pillars or animal or human sculptures lend immense beauty to the structures. The other important Vijayanagar contributions to this temple are the tall and magnificent *gōpura* on the east with its massive elaborately moulded granite-built plinth, and the compact little shrines for the numerous Āḷvārs and *Āchāryas* which are neatly built along the periphery of the outermost *prākāra.*

As already pointed out, the first three *prākāras* have in them many of the earliest structures of this temple. A discussion on the architectural significance of the so-called 'hill' which is in the form of a square enclosure is given at the end of this chapter. We will study the architecture of the other parts of this temple one by one.

First prākāra

The complex of structures over the hill is interesting. On plan, it is composed of a square cella, an *antarāḷa,* two long rectangular *maṇḍapas* in the axial line. There is no epigraphical or literary data available to date this complex and thus we have only to depend on the architectural style of the structure. The mouldings on the wall-surface of the *garbagriha* give us admirable clues. The *adhiṣṭāna* as we see it from inside is composed of a high *jagati,* a *tripaṭṭa* (three-faceted) *kumuda,* a recessed *kanṭa* and a plain *paṭṭika.* Over the *paṭṭika* is the *vēdi* which comprises a recessed *kanṭa*-like fillet and an *ūrdhvapadma* course and topped by the *prati.* Below the *jagati* there must have been an *upāna* moulding which is evidently buried in the inner floorings. The pilasters are plain and square in section. They have rather heavy corbels which are bevelled having a tenon-like projection, a typical feature of the Chōḷa style. The pilasters on the two *mukha-maṇḍapas* also display identical features thus, showing that they, together with the sanctum, form one compact group. The *adhiṣṭāna* mouldings in this complex are of the simplest type, devoid of any ornamentation. This together with other features like the massive pilasters and heavy tenon-corbel etc., may give it an early date. It can be ascribed to the middle of the eleventh century A.D. (Fig. 40—item A).

Punyakōṭi-vimāna (Fig. 4)

There is a fine *dvitaḷa* (two-storeyed) *vimāna* of *āyatāsra* (oblong) type with the *śāla* or wagon-vault *śikhara,* over the *garbagriha.* Normally, the *śāla-śikhara* with a rectangular base can be built over a rectangular sanctum. But here unusually, the *śikhara* having a rectangular base has been superposed over a square sanctum. This is indeed a rarity and it has been made possible by resting the rectangular base of the *śikhara* not only on the sanctum walls proper but also beyond and over the walls of the second circuit around the sanctum, as can be seen from the accompanying plan. The *vimāna* has completely been renovated and replastered in the thirties of the present century, thus obliterating all the old features. But we know from an epigraph that Krishnadēva Rāya covered this *Punyakōṭi-vimāna* with gold sometime in A.D. 1514.[3]

All around the *harmya* of the second storey, there runs a *hāra* or string of miniature shrines such as the *karnakūṭas* at the four corners and the *bhadraśālās* in the centre and *pañjaras* in between forming the components over the *prastara* of the ground storey. The top of the second storey has four seated Garuḍas in *añjali* pose at the four corners besides some representations of Vishnu as *Vimāna-dēvatas*, occupying the *nāsika* projections of the rectangular *grīva*. The wagon-top or *śāla-śikhara* carries a row of seven metal *stūpis*, over its ridge and its two ends are large *nāsika* fronts.

The eight-pillared *mahāmaṇḍapa* in this complex also seems to be of the Chōḷa times. The pillars have round cross-section and bear heavy bevelled corbels at the top.

The pillared cloister (*pradakshina*) around the entire sanctum-complex is an addition of the Vijayanagar times, as already pointed out. The pillars which are rather tall (2 metres high) have the evolved *pushpa-pōtikai* corbels.

Second prākāra

At the base of the hill with the second *prākāra*, some details of the Narasimha shrine and the double-storeyed pillared cloister around deserve our attention. The small shrine of Narasimha is of the *nirandhāra* type, having no circumambulatory around it. So only its frontal view is to be seen as in a cave-temple. The pilasters that flank its facade are noteworthy. They are short but massive and are composed of two *sadurams* or square sections at the ends with an octagonal middle—a feature which is a survival of the Pallava and the early Chōḷa style. They have very heavy bevelled corbels with prominent tenon-like projections. The earliest inscription in this shrine and indeed in this temple which is found on the inner sanctum wall is dated A.D. 1050,[4] and as it does not refer to the construction of this shrine, there is room to presume that the shrine might have been there even slightly earlier. Since Narasimha is a cave-dweller, this shrine has been conceived of in the form of a cave, cut, as it were, into the Hastigiri hill. But actually, it is only an improvised masonry cell with a low ceiling.[5]

The *gōpura*-entrance in front of the Narasimha shrine is a fine structure of the 11th century A.D. The earliest epigraph is dated A.D. 1073 and belongs to the Chōḷa king Kulōttunga-I.[6] It is inscribed on the plinth (*adhisṭāna*) portion of the gateway. The plinth of this entrance is quite high and carries a number of mouldings which, from the bottom upwards, are: the *upāna*, the plain *jagati*, a prominent *vritta-kumuda*, the top of which has the lotus-petal decoration, a double *kanṭa* which is relieved at intervals by the rafter-end motifs and a frieze of animals, probably lions. Over it, is the wall portion which is relieved by a number of tall and plain pilasters (of square cross-section) having the bevelled corbels and tenon-like projections. The superstructure over this is of brick and mortar. It rises in three diminishing tiers to a height of about 35 ft. and is topped by a rectangular *grīva* surmounted by a wagon-top *śikhara* with large *nāsika*-ends on either side and a series of *kalaśas* on top. The parapets of the storeys carry strings of *kūṭas*, *śālas* and *pañjaras* all around. There are no sculptures except on the *grīva* portions which has some stucco reliefs. They have been spoiled by later-day renovation. Though the exterior is renovated, the *gōpura* preserves the older contours and the style of the Chōḷa *gōpuras* which

are usually broad and squattish and are invariably smaller than the *vimāna* on the central shrine.[7] The *maṇḍapa* in front of Āṇḍāḷ shrine is a fine Vijayanagar structure (Fig. 5).

Third prākāra

This *gōpura* leads us out into the courtyard enclosed by third *prākāra*, wherein very important shrines are situated. They are :

Kariamāṇikkaperumāḷ shrine

The simple and elegant shrine seems to have been built roundabout A.D. 1129 and in many ways it typifies the prevailing norms or styles of the day.

It has a square *garbagriha*, an *antarāḷa* and a small *mukha-maṇḍapa*. Its height is not more than 3 metres. There is no superstructure over the sanctum. Here we see the *adhisṭāna* mouldings still retaining their simplicity with only a few additional lotus-petal ornamentations (Fig. 40, item B). The bottom-most fillets constitute the *upāna*, over it on the vertical plane are the *adhōpadma* mouldings, then a plain *jagatī* which bears a number of Chōḷa inscriptions, a *tripaṭṭa-kumuda*, a plain *kanṭa* with *padma* base, a projecting *paṭṭika* and over it is the *vēdi* portion and finally the *prati*. The wall portion is adorned by a number of simple and shallow niches and beautiful pilasters. There are five niches, two each on the north and south and one on the back wall i.e., on the west. The niches are square and simple in design, unlike the later ones which are highly ornamental, as found in the Perundēvi Tāyār.

The shafts of the pilasters are square in cross-section and carry a *padma-banda* neck moulding, *kalaśa*, the *tāḍi*, the *kumbha* rather flattish, the *idaḷ* or the petal moulding and the thin abacus or *phalaka*. We see the two types of corbels employed here—the typical bevelled one for the corner pilasters and the incipient *pūmunai*-corbel for the rest. This latter type of corbel indicates the slow and gradual transition to the next stage of evolution, with the central tenon assuming a campanulate floral form, the precursor of the *pushpa-pōtika* of the later period. The cornice carries a number of *kūḍus* on its face. Over the cornice is a short parapet carrying the *vyāḷavari* frieze which becomes a recurring *motif* for the structures of this period. The pillar design of *mukha-maṇḍapa* is interesting. It is composed of three *sadurams* (square) and two octagonal intervening portions. They have the typical Chōḷa corbels.

Abhishēka-maṇḍapa

The *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* is large square and closed pavilion built in the early part of the 13th century A.D. It preserves its late Chōḷa characteristics intact. The *adhisṭāna* or the basement is built in bold proportion having a number of mouldings like the plain and flat *upāna*, the *adhōpadma* moulding, the *jagati*, *vritta-kumuda*, a simple recessed *kanṭa* with lotus petal moulding flanking the upper and the lower sides and a straight projecting *paṭṭika* on which are seen a number of inscriptions. The *vritta-kumuda*, though boldly depicted, is much more stylised than the one found in earlier structures, such as the *gōpura* basement in front of the Narasimha shrine, described above. Again, over the *paṭṭika* is a frieze of petal-moulding which serves, as it were, the base for the wall portion of the shrine. The exterior of the

wall shows reliefs of pilasters which display the late-Chōḷa features like the *padma-banda* neck moulding over the shaft (*kāl*). The shaping of the vase-like *kalaśa* is also noteworthy. The lower doucene of the abacus or the *palagai* is scalloped into petals or *idaḷ*—another late feature. Here also two types of corbels are employed —the bevelled type for the corner pilasters and the incipient *pūmunai* for the rest. The cornice tends to become heavy and is curved in two to form a double-flexure that is typical of the Vijayanagar *kapōtas*. There is only one niche on the eastern wall of this closed *maṇḍapa*. In it is placed a large image of Garuḍa, facing the main shrine on the east.

On the western side of this *maṇḍapa*, a later annexe was added as a facade in the Vijayanagar times. There are two elegant balustraded steps leading to this *maṇḍapa*. This was built in the 16th century A.D.

Anantāḻvār shrine (Fig. 6)

This is another modest and well-dated shrine. It was built in A.D. 1212. It has a square sanctum, an *antarāḷa* and a small four-pillared *mukha- maṇḍapa*. The entire shrine stands on a *padma-pīṭha* or expanded lotus-basement and over it is the *adhisṭāna* which is composed of low *upāna*, a *jagati*, a *vritta kumuda*, a recessed flat *kanṭa* and a flat and straight *paṭṭika* (Fig. 40, item c). Over it, is the wall portion which is recessed and relieved by niches and pilasters. The niches are short but embellished with a canopy of the *śāla* type with a central *kūḍu* arch. Here also the niches are quite simple in design, unlike those of the Vijayanagar times, found in the Tāyār shrine. The shafts of the pilasters are square in cross-section and have the *padma-banda* neck moulding. The abacus is neither thick nor broad but has the scalloped lotus on its underside. The corbel does not have the tenon-like projection but has an incipient *pūmunai* curvature, characteristic of the transitional period. Over it is the curved *kapōta* and then a *vyāḷavari* or frieze of leonine griffins over the *prastara*. The shrine has a *dvitaḷa vimāna* which is square upto the second *taḷa*. Over it is circular *grīva* which is topped by a circular domical *śikhara*. There are four prominent *nāsikas* with *kīrtimukha* finial. On the four corners of *pindi* terrace below the *grīva* are seated four Garuḍas, alternating with Vishnu as *vimāna-dēvata*. The Hayagrīva form of Vishnu is seated on the southern side and the Nrisimha form on the northern side.

Thousand-pillared-maṇḍapa

The thousand-pillared-*maṇḍapa* on the north-eastern corner of this *prākāra* is also a contribution of the beginning of the 14th century A.D. and hence, we see many of the features of the transitional period. The plinth is embellished with many ornamental mouldings, particularly a double *vyāḷavari* frieze; the pillars are rather tall and slender; the corbels have a distinct *pūmunai* corbel, and there is a well-bent *koḍungai* forming the cornice. The pillars have not yet assumed the extravagant ornamentation of the Vijayanagar times.

Kitchen

The kitchen on the south-east corner of the *prākāra* is an older structure constructed during the time of Kulōttunga-I. It is a closed room with a *mukha-maṇḍapa*

at its entrance. The pillars are square with three *sadurams* (square portions) and two hexagonal or fluted intervening portions. The pillar capital bears pronounced chamfered corbels. The cornice is thick and straight.

Perundēvi Tāyār shrine (Fig. 7)

It has already been noticed that the shrine for Perundēvi Tāyār came into existence probably in the beginning of the 13th century. Its presence is mentioned in an epigraph dated A.D. 1236.[8] But the shrine proper, in its present form, is a construction of the Vijayanagar times, though the high pediment on which its enclosure wall is constructed is an older structure, belonging to the 13th century. Obviously, this portion underwent elaboration during the Vijayanagar times. The earlier shrine was replaced by the present elegant shrine together with its other forward complements like the cloistered verandah, sometime around about A.D. 1487 as already shown.[9]

The sanctum *antarāḷa* complex of the Tāyār shrine is one of the best illustrations of the ornate architecture of the Vijayanagar epoch. It closely resembles the Amman shrine in the Hazārā Rāma temple at Hampi.[10] From the base to the cornice, the entire surface is embellished with rich ornamental details, bold in design and exuberant in expression. The niche projection and the corresponding recesses which start right from the basement level break the monotony of the plan while the deep plinth-mouldings produce sharp effect of light and shade.

The *adhōpadma* moulding over the *upāna* is very pronounced. The *jagati* is plain except for the Vijayanagar inscriptions over it. The *vritta-kumuda* is very much constricted and ribbed, while the *paṭṭika* is quite prominent. There are altogether five niches—two on the sides and one on the rear wall, all projecting out from the ground level, thus breaking the straight line of the plan. The niches are highly ornate with an ornamental *kapōta* canopy which are in turn surmounted by *nāsika* fronts. The niches are flanked on either side by richly decorated *kumbha-pañjaras* placed in the recesses of the wall. They are pilasters having *pūrna-kumbhas* or full vases of plenty as their bases with excrescent foliage with emergent pillar shaft carrying a *nāsika* top. The other pilasters have faceted shafts and the *nāgapaḍam* decoration at the base. The *phalaka* is thin and has its lower part prominently scalloped into petals. The *pushpa-pōtika* corbel at the top is very pronounced. The cornice (*koḍungu*) is also embellished with a string of *kūḍu* arches, extending forward considerably.

The *vimāna* over the sanctum is named the *Kalyānakōṭi vimāna*, built in the 17th century. It is fully covered with copper sheet and hence its architectural features are masked.

Vijayanagar-maṇḍapas

The pillared *mahā-maṇḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine seems to have been built in the 16th century by Aḷagia Manavāḷa Jīyar. It has typical Vijayanagar ornamental columns with rearing horsemen attached to their shafts. In some pillars rearing *vyālas* are also attached.

There are four more *maṇḍapas* of the Vijayanagar times in the forecourts of this *prākāra*. They are : the *kiḷi-maṇḍapa*, the *ūñjal-maṇḍapa* and two other pillared

halls, one in front of the *abhishēka-maṇḍapa* and the other interposed between the latter and the Tāyār shrine entrance. All of them bear unmistakable Vijayanagar characteristic like the tall fluted pillars with a prominent *pushpa-pōtika* corbel and a protruding *koḍungu*, with double flexure. Moreover as already seen the Vijayanagar royal emblem is carved boldly in almost all these *maṇḍapas*. There are some interesting bas-relief sculptures which will be noticed later The *ūñjal-maṇḍapa* in particular is an exquisite specimen of Vijayanagar art. Built on high plinth in an open courtyard, it is supported by elaborately worked composite pillars with clusters of smaller pillars, inter-connected, as it were, by some feligree work. The capitals over them are multi-faceted and massive. The *koḍungu* or the cornice is very conspicuous with its double flexure; on the eastern face of it is carved the Vijayanagar crest—Varāha, sun, moon etc. The compact little tower with the *śāla-śikhara* and *ēkataḷa* lends beauty to the *maṇḍapa*. There are some good stucco figures over the *vimāna* and fine carving over the inner ceiling of the *maṇḍapa* (Fig. 8) From its style this *maṇḍapa* can be ascribed to the 16th century A.D.

Gōpura entrance and the compound wall

As we go out of the third *prākāra*, we pass through a *gōpura* entrance which is now called *Tōdarmal-vāsal*. It is a fine and solid structure going back to the time of Kulōttunga-I. Many of his inscriptions are seen on the plinth portions and earliest of them belongs to A.D. 1106.[11] The style of its massive *adhisṭāna* mouldings and the pilasters is exactly like that of the *gōpura* entrance in front of the Narasimha shrine; both of them were apparently built in the time of Kulōttunga-I. The compound wall abutting on it seems to have been reconstructed more elaborately under the supervision of Aḷagia Manavāḷa Jīyar, whose portrait figures are kept in small niches at the top of this compound wall.

The *gōpura* is broad-based and rises gradually in five diminishing tiers, the *grīva* is rectangular over and is crowned by a *śāla-śikhara* with five *kalaśas*. At the centre of every *taḷa* there is a doorway flanked by *dwārapālakas* made of stucco. Four garuḍas in *anjali* are seated on the four corners of the topmost *taḷa*, just below the *grīva*. Other than this, there are no sculptures on its body. Strings of miniature shrines like *pañjara*, *kūṭa*, *śāla* are seen marking the parapet of every *taḷa*. Though renovated in recent years the *gōpura* has unmistakable later Chōḷa elegance and proportion. Abutting over this *gōpura* on the west is a rectangular pillared portico built probably during the time of Krishnadēva Rāya, whose inscriptions are found on its plinth.

Fourth prākāra

Most of the shrines in this courtyard, in their present extant form, as well as the *maṇḍapas* are the products of the Vijayanagar times. Some of them like the *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* and the *vāhana maṇḍapas* are extraordinarily elegant and are of great architectural and iconographic interest while many of the shrines are simple and unpretentious structures. To the latter category belong the shrines of Peria-āḻvār, Mudal-āḻvār, Tiruppāṇ, Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi and Tirumaḻisai, which are distributed along the periphery of the outer enclosure. All of them display the same pattern of construction—a square sanctum, a small *antarāḷa* and a *mukha-maṇḍapa* with open

pradakshina round the sanctum (see General Plan I). The pillars and pilasters display the typical features of the 15th and 16th centuries.

The shrine of Tiruppān and Toṇḍaraḍippoḍi is noteworthy for its elegant *vimāna* over the sanctum.

Similarly, the shrine of Nammāḻvār possesses a fine *śikhara* over its square sanctum. Another noteworthy structure in the Nammāḻvār shrine is its pillared *mahā-maṇḍapa* in front. It is a product of Vijayanagar times and it contains some portrait sculptures of a Vijayanagar chieftain besides the sculptures of Āḻvārs and *āchāryas* like Tirukkachi-nambi.

Krishna shrine

From the architectural point of view this is very interesting shrine in the outermost *prākāra*. It has a square sanctum, a transverse *antarāḷa* and a *mukha-maṇḍapa* of a late date. The cubical or the *samachaturasra* sanctum is topped by a *dvitaḷa śikhara* (two-storeyed) or *nāgara* class.[12] This is indeed a unique type in the temple, for invariably all the square sanctums here are crowned only by circular or *vēsara grīva* and *śikhara*. Square *grīva* and square *śikhara* are indeed rare. This might have been built under the patronage of the later Pāṇḍyas who were familiar with such square-type vimānas.[13] An inscription of one Sundara Pāṇḍya is found on the south wall of the entrance of the shrine. Evidently, it was Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya who brought Kāñchi under the Pāṇḍyan control sometime around A.D. 1260. But unfortunately the inscription is fragmentary. Probably, the shrine was built sometime during this period. The pilaster corbels have the incipient *pūmunai* motif. There are five niches, two on either side and one on the back wall. The niches are each crowned by a small *śāla-śikhara* with a central *nāsika* arch. The cornice is short and straight. The small *maṇḍapa* in front is a Vijayanagar addition.

Chakrattāḻvār shrine[14]

This shrine is more like a spacious square hall without any features. The *antarāḷa* is not well marked. Around the hall is a closed *pradakshina* passage. Since Chakrattāḻvār or Sudarsana image is two-faced, there are entrance gateways on either side of the shrine chamber. There are also two *mukha-maṇḍapas* in front of the two entrances.

The *adhisṭāna* of the sanctum is composed of a plain *upāna*, a faceted *kumuda*, a recessed *kanṭa* and two plain *paṭṭikas*. The wall space is relieved by pilasters with shafts having square cross-section and the incipient *pushpa-pōtika* corbel. The features show that the shrine might have been built in the latter half of the 13th or the earlier half of the 14th century.

The twelve-pillared *mukha-maṇḍapa* on the west is a clear Vijayanagar addition, as evidenced by the tall double columns with prominent corbels. The central ceiling near the entrance is occupied by a large granite slab, bearing fine relief carving of Rāma, Hanumān and Bālakrishna. In the centre of the slab is a large lotus in blossom. Around it are some of the scenes from Krishna's life such as Krishna killing a demon in the form of a bird (Bakāsura), another in the form of a calf (Dhēnukāsura), killing the elephant *kēśi*, swallowing butter. Other figures carved in the next panel are Rāma, Lakshmana, Sīta and Vishnu on Garuḍa etc. The Vijayanagar royal

insignia is also carved prominently.

Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa (Fig 9)

Perhaps the most remarkable product of the Vijayanagar art in this temple is the *kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*, the ornamental pillared pavilion used for the annual ceremonial marriage of the God and the Goddess. Standing on an exquisitely carved elevated platform and occupying an area of 575 square metres this pavilion is supported by a closely lined colonnade of pillars, 96 in number, which are remarkable for their varied decorative detail and sculptural exuberance. Its lofty plinth (2 metres high) is divided by a number of prominent horizontal bands with finely carved designs, animal as well as floral, each band being separated from the next one by a deeply recessed portion. Friezes of elephants, horses, swans (*hamsa*), narrative panels from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, dancing figures etc., occupy these bands.

The pillars are all tall and monolithic and their shafts are sculptured into rich and varying patterns like warriors and hunters on rearing horses, the rampant *yāḷi* which are very characteristic of the Vijayanagar art motifs, as seen in similar pavilions at Vellore, Srīrangam, Virinchipuram (North Arcot District). In some of them, full sculptures in the round are projecting out like Rati on the parrot, Manmata on swan etc. "The pillars consist", in the words of Percy Brown, "a bizarre grouping of imaginary statuary with stone-cutting of a high order." About the rampant animal motif which repeatedly occurs in all their *maṇḍapas* the same renowned art-critic observes aptly, "during the Vijayanagar regime this motif appears so frequently that it dominates every conception until it becomes an obsession. The rampant horseman in the later Dravidian building reveals the spirit of the times as the Vijayanagar era corresponds in some respects to the age of chivalry and romance which prevailed in the mediaeval Europe. That the armed forces of the Vijayanagar empire were of the finest calibre which kept their hereditary foes (Muslim powers) at bay, whereas almost every other part of the country succumbed at once. Something of this temper seems embodied in the art of this period and accounts for the columns of splendid cavaliers nonchalantly astride the gigantic rearing chargers and engaged in furious combat with fabulous creatures."[15] Here in this temple motif is profusely depicted in its multifarious variety not only in the *kalyāṇa maṇḍapa* but also repeated in the *vāhana maṇḍapa* and the *mahā-maṇḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine—all of which belong to the 16th century. Besides the normal Vijayanagar soldier with his typical head-dress, full sleeve and sword, a few European soldiers with carbines or muskets are also portrayed. Probably, they represent the Portuguese soldiers who were recruited into the Vijayanagar army.

Besides these elaborately wrought composite columns which are found invariably near the facade and the sides the vast majority of the monolithic pillars inside display contrasting geometrical shapes—a cube or *saduram* alternative with a fluted cylinder, all copiously carved. Each capital is a substantial four-branched foliated volute each terminating in the characteristic flower-pendant. Two other interesting features of this *maṇḍapa* are its magnificent balustraded stepped entrance and the marvellous free-hanging chains of stone-rings at the four corners of the massive double flexed and intricately wrought cornice above.

Entrance gōpuras

This immense temple-complex is appropriately enclosed by a high outer boundary wall, having two imposing gateways—one on the east and the other on the west—both being two towering *gōpuras*. As already pointed out, the *gōpura* on the west is shorter and more squattish whereas the one on the east is taller and narrower. The former is of an earlier date, as it seems to be essentially rooted in the late Chōḷa tradition.

The earliest inscription on the plinth portion is of the 13th century. The door-jambs, made of single tall monolithic pieces, are plain without the *śālabanjika* and the creeper motif, that invariably appears in the Vijayanagar gateways. This motif is prominently carved on the eastern *gōpura*. Further, the Vijayanagar insignia that is boldly carved on the ceilings of the gateway on the east is conspicuous by its absence on the western gateway. The corbels of the pilasters in the latter are still in the traditional stage, namely, undeveloped *pushpa-pōtika*. Hence, the western *gōpura* is to be dated to the latter half of the 13th century while the eastern *gōpura*-entrance belongs to the first half of the 16th century A.D.

Western gōpura (Fig. 10)

The massive granite base of the *adhisṭāna* of the *gōpura*, about 7 metres in height, is divided in its vertical plane into two principal storeys by a prominent *paṭṭika*. Along the horizontal section, this huge mass is broken up by a number of projecting bays, alternating with recesses. The lower section or storey of the vertical stone part is composed of prominent horizontal mouldings with a very bold *padma-taḷa* base, a massive *vritta kumuda*, a *paṭṭika*, *vēdi* and *prati* over which are arranged a series of ornamental pilasters. Over this series is a broad *prastara* with a number of shallow *kūḍu*-arches. This *prastara* marks the dividing line between the lower and the upper storeys of the stone base. The upper section is almost a repetition of the lower one with certain differences. In addition to the similar horizontal mouldings we see the presence of four projecting niches on each side and the *kumba-pañjaras* in the recesses. The corbels of the pilasters are in the form of undeveloped *pushpa-pōtika*; the eave or *kapōta* has not assumed the prominent double-flexure curvature. Hence, the style is characteristic of the later-Chōḷa or the transitional period. The same can be said of the superstructure which is built in brick and mortar in seven diminishing tiers. It is broad and stunted. The body of the tower is not embellished by sculptures as are those of later *gōpuras* of the Nayak period. Rather it is absolutely plain except for a series of miniature shrines composed of the *śālas*, *karnakūṭas* and *pañjaras*. The central projecting doorways are carried right upto the *grīva* portion. The *grīva* is rectangular and at the apex is the massive *śāla-śikhara* topped by nine glittering metal *kalaśas*.

Eastern gōpura (Fig. 11)

The *gōpura* in the east is much taller (50 metres high) and composed of nine storeys, and topped by eleven *kalaśas*. In fact it is the tallest structure in the entire temple-complex. It is a typical product of the mature Vijayanagar style—tall and narrow with a pronounced emphasis on verticality. It closely resembles the main tower of the Ekāmrēśvarar temple at Kāñchi which was built by Krishnadēva Rāya in the beginning of the 16th century.[16] This *gōpura*, as already pointed out, may also

belong to the same period. The Vijayanagar state-crest is boldly depicted on the ceilings of this *gōpura*. There are two fine *śālabanjikas* (ladies with creepers) carved on either side of the door-frame. The door-frame is highly ornamental (Fig. 12).

The massive stone-base is made up of two parts, divided by a prominent *kapōta*. The road level outside the *gōpura* has risen considerably, burying the lowest mouldings. However, the prominent *vritta-kumuda*, *paṭṭika* and *prati* are clearly seen relieving the horizontal plane, while the vertical plane is broken up by a number of pilasters and projected niches. The upper section of the basement is relieved by projecting niches and the recesses bearing the *kumba-pañjara* pilaster. The corbels are very much evolved with prominent lotus-bud end.

The superstructure, made up of brick and mortar, is plain except for the indentations made by the series of miniature shrines like the *śāla* in the centre and *kūṭas* at the corners and the *pañjaras* in between on the sides. The central doorway opening is present in every *taḷa* right upto the *grīva* which is rectangular. At the apex is the massive *śāla-śikhara* with the *kīrti-mukha* ends.

Hastigiri—a hillock or a raised mound ?

As pointed out in the beginning of this chapter, a peculiar and almost intriguing feature of this temple is the so-called Hasti-hill, over which the main sanctuary is placed. It is in the form of a square enclosure closed by huge walls covering an area of 30 metre square.

The enclosing walls are about 7.3 metres high and are plain except for one *kōpota* moulding in the middle and the *vyāḷavari* on the top. The shrine of Varadarāja on the upper floor is reached by a flight of steps at the south-eastern corner of the enclosure. On the western side of the 'hill', on the ground floor, is the shrine for Nrisimha which is conceived of as a cave, though this is also a built-up structure.

What is inside this huge square enclosure on the ground floor which has since been closed ? When and why was it closed ? All the Vaishnava *āchāryas* like Kūrattāḷvār, Tirukkachi-nambi (11th century) and Vēdānta Dēsika (13th century) mention it as the hill. Kūrattāḷvār in one of his verses calls the Lord as residing at the *Śikhara* (peak) of the hill. The present walled enclosure can be dated not later than the middle of the 11th century A.D. at the latest as attested by the presence of an inscription dated A.D. 1050 inside. In all probability, the walled enclosure was there during the times of Rāmānuja (1016-1137) and his contemporary Kūrattāḷvār and Tirukkachi-nambi. Therefore their references to the *giri* or *śailam* were only to this walled elevation.

What is inside this enclosure is anybody's guess—natural hillock or an artificially raised mound ? The chances for the existence of a rocky hillock there are remote, for we do not see any visible rocky outcrop for miles around in the neighbourhood. Secondly, if it were a natural hillock there was no need to build the enclosure walls and encase it; nor is such a practice known. On the other hand, from a few exposures seen near the flight of steps (leading up the 'hill') it can be observed, that the outer veneering is done by roughly-hewn blocks of stone, giving us the appearance of an artificially raised mound or platform. This also explains or justifies the camouflaging done with the high walls to cover up the mound and at the same time

give it the sanctity of a hill. This camouflaging is seen very clearly in the so-called cave-shrine of Nrisimha on the ground floor. There is no trace of natural rock anywhere inside the shrine which has been improvised by building walls of dressed stones to make it a narrow and rectangular cell about 11 metres long and 2 metres broad (in the average). The hind wall is in the form of a stone-screen which prevents the onlooker from seeing the inner core or the portals of the 'hill'. It appears to have been the result of a deliberate attempt to create an artificial cave-shrine to provide an abode for Nrisimha, the cave-dweller.

Whatever may be the true contents or nature of this hill, it cannot be gainsaid that it is a solid foundation meant to carry massive superstructures—the sanctum with a narrow processional circuit around it (which is now closed), an *antarāḷa,* two *mukha-maṇḍapas*, a *mahā-maṇḍapa* and an outer pillared verandah—all occupying an area of 900 sq. metres. The walls of the sanctum are nearly 4 metres thick. Added to it is the weight of the large *śāla-śikhara* on the sanctum. This massive weight could stand only on a solid foundation on either rock or well-ramped platform. We are not permitted to make any openings in this enclosure to have a glimpse of its contents. But perhaps a near parallel is afforded by the temple of Chandraprabha at Tiruparuttikunram near Kāñchi. There also, the ground-floor is closed and the main shrine of Chandraprabha is situated on the upper floor, reached by a flight of steps. This was also called by the Jainas as '*Ērvana sthalam*' or the *Malayanār Kōvil* (the hill temple) because of its elevation. Some trial diggings were made at the top near the *antarāḷa* portion and it was found that the so-called hill was filled with sand and mud. The possibility of a similar arrangement at Hastigiri cannot be ruled out.[17]

What is the purpose in creating this elevated platform ? Why was the *garbagriha* placed on its top ? The reason, as pointed out earlier, may simply be to give a hill-like elevation, as in the case of a few other temples of Tamilnād. Such an artificially raised hill is called in Tamil *Kaṭṭu-malai* and a few temples built over such 'hills' are found scattered in Tamilnād. The Vishnu temple built by Dantivarman at Alampakkam is an outstanding example. The main deities in the two famous shrines—Vatapatrasāyi temple at Srīvilliputtūr and Tirukkōttiyūr temple—both in Ramanathapuram District of Tamilnād are also not on the ground floor but on the raised platform.

Uttaravēdi Concept

But a deeper significance may perhaps also be considered as regards the raised enclosure of this temple. It may be an architectural depiction of the *purānic* description of the *Uttaravēdi* on which Brahma performed his *yajña* to invoke the presence of Lord Vishnu. The *sthalapurāṇa* account has it that Brahma ordered Visvakarma, the divine architect, to convert the hill into a square *Uttaravēdi* for him to perform the *yajña*.[18] Whatever may be the value of the purānic account, the concept of *Uttaravēdi* mentioned here seems to be significant. The *Uttaravēdi,* according to the ancient texts,[19] was a high platform or mound, square in shape, which served as the ground or basement for the *fire-altar* which was also a square and which was at the centre of the *Uttaravēdi*. The fire-altar was called the *Nābhi* and in it was placed the *fire-pan* or the *ukha* made of clay. It is also square in

shape. It is spoken of as the womb of *Agni* or fire and its cube is stated to hold the manifested universe. The Hindu temple, as Stella Kramrish has shown, reflects this conception very well.[20]

Here in this temple, the so-called Hastigiri is a large enclosure of 30 metre square with nearly 8 metres high walls, which might represent the *Uttaravēdi*, the high square basement. In the centre of this basement, we have two more concentric square enclosures, the outer measuring 13 metre square (around the sanctum including the *tiruvunnāḷigai*) which might represent the fire-altar or the *nābhi* and the innermost sanctuary (*garbagriha*) which is a chamber of 3 metre square might represent the fire-pan or the womb-chamber.

Though basically, every Hindu temple may be taken to represent this concept and the *vēdi* has been incorporated as an integral architectural member in the temple elevation, special emphasis is laid here on the *Uttaravēdi*. Because the place had come to be renowned as the place where Brahma erected the *Uttaravēdi* for his *yajña* and Lord Varadarāja in his *Punyakōṭi-vimāna* came out of the sacrificial fire, it is likely that this idea was architecturally depicted by laying emphasis on the *Uttaravēdi* and making it into a large and imposing platform for the extant *vimāna* along with its circumambulatory. It is an instance of the knowledge of the rites inspiring architectural forms.

NOTES

1. Dubreuil classified the styles in the following manner : from A.D. 850 to 1100 Chōḷa; from A.D. 1100 to 1350 Pāṇḍya; though broadly correct, the need for revision has been emphasised by more than one scholar. See K.R. Srinivasan, J.O I S.O.A. XVI (1948), *The Last of the Great Chōla Temple*. In the Chōḷa period itself three phases, the Early, the Middle and the Later have been distinguished. The Middle Chōḷa phase coincides with the reigns of Rājarāja-I, Rājēndra-I and Rājādhirāja-I. K.A.N. Sastri, *Chōlas*, p. 693.
   Also see S.R. Balasubramaniam, *Four Chōla Temples* (1963), pp. 34-35.
2. Dubreuil called it the 'Pāṇḍyan phase'. K.R. Srinivasan has rightly questioned this and shown that the Chōḷa style continued to hold the ground for a considerably longer period, almost to the end of the 13th century A.D., if not later (J.O.I.S.O.A., *op. cit.*, p. 33). Particularly, the Pāṇḍyan appellation cannot be applied in *toto* to the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region, where the later Chōḷa style imperceptibly merged with the succeeding Vijayanagar style. The incipient *pushpapōtikai* corbel which is usually considered to be a Pāṇḍyan contribution, actually occurs in well dated Chōḷa structures of this temple, datable to A.D 1129 (see Fig. 40, item B). Similarly, they occur in the Chōḷa structure at Dārāsuram and Tribhuvanam. For all these reasons it would be better to designate the style of the period for 1100-1350 as later Chōḷa, particularly in the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam area.
3. 478 of 1919.
4. 519 of 1919.
5. See also at the end of the chapter for further discussion on the point.
6. 522 of 1919.
7. This *gōpura* compares well with the *gōpura* on the *Āryabaṭṭāl-vāsal* at Srirangam temple, built in the 11th century A.D. (Hari Rao, *The Srirangam Temple*, p. 56).
8. 605 of 1919.
9. See Chapter III.
10. See for illustration, Longhurst, *Humpi Ruins*, Fig. 28, p. 74.
11. 631, 632 and 635 of 1919.
12. F.H. Gravely and T.N. Ramachandran, *Three Main Styles of Temple Architecture*, 1934, p. 22. Also see for importance of this type K.V. Soundara Rajan, *The Matrix of South Indian Architecture*, J.I.H. XLIII, Dec. 1965, pp. 808-811.
13. The Kattaḷagia Singar shrine within the Srīrangam temple has a similar *nāgara* type of *śikhara* and it was also built by a Pāṇḍya king (Hari Rao, *The Srirangam Temple*, p. 64).

14. The Chakrattāḷvār shrine is slightly on the north-west of the main sanctum. At Srīrangam it is on the south-west. Evidently a fixed location for the shrine was not evolved. But both are in the fourth enclosure.
15. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (Buddhist and Hindu), Third Edn.
16. See also the western *gōpura* at Tiruvannamalai whose superstructure was built by Krishnadeva Raya about A.D. 1516. F.H. Gravely, *The Gōpuras of Tiruvannamalai*, Madras, 1959, p. 5.
17. T.N. Ramachandran, *Tiruparuttikunram and its Temples* (1934), pp. 12-13.
18. Vide Chapter I.
19. *Brihat Samhita*, Quoted by Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, pp. 146-147.
20. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER IX

ICONOGRAPHY

General features

As one of the largest Vishnu temples of South India, having shrines for different forms or aspects of Vishnu, His *āyudhapurushas* and other *āvaraṇa dēvatas* (subsidiary deities), Srī Varadarājaswāmi temple presents interesting iconographic details which deserve study. As in architecture so in iconography, we find that the temple possesses fine stone and metal specimens, representative of the Chōḷa and Vijayanagar traditions. While the former are comparatively scarce and found only as enshrined images, the latter are found in great profusion not only as cult-images but also bas-reliefs on the pillars and the plinths of the *maṇḍapas*. Stone images such as those of Ranganātha, Narasimha, Valampuri Ganēsa and the metal icons of the main deity of Varadarāja and His two consorts, Perundēvi, Rāmānuja, Nammāḻvār, Madurakavi-Āḻvar, Nāthamuni, Anantāḻvār and Chakrattāḻvār are some of the outstanding specimens which typify the naturalness in form and simplicity of demeanour, the hallmarks of the Chōḷa style. The contours of the body are not angular or rigid but natural and flowing. The ornamentation or the garments like the *antarīya* are simple and depicted as though they are part of the body and do not stand out separately. While the icons of Gods and Goddesses with their *abhaya* and *varada mudras* radiate the qualities of *saulabhya* (easy accessibility) and *sausīlya* (graciousness), the twin qualities held supreme by the Srī-Vaishnavas, the icons of the Āḻvārs like Nammāḻvār and Madurakavi and the *āchāryas* like Nāthamuni and Rāmānuja are embodiments of humility, devotion and absolute surrender in body and soul to the one they held as the Supreme Being. They were mortals but worshipped as divine beings. These images, with their characteristic *añjali* or *vyakyāna-mudra*, inspire the same emotions of humility and devotion in the hearts and minds of multitudes, who hold them in veneration. Their lives and works are considered the beacon-lights, showing the path of salvation for the humanity. Hence, the importance given to these saints in the temples.

The Vijayanagar period continued the iconographic traditions with fresh vigour. Icons of the majority of the Āḻvārs and *āchāryas* in this temple were products of this time. Manavāḷa Mahāmuni, the last of the great *āchāryas*, was deified in this period. The sculptural reliefs found in the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*, the *Vāhana-maṇḍapa*, and a few other places, show remarkable variety in theme and beauty in depiction. Though the classic touch of the Chōḷa art is missing, still they possess considerable grace and artistic charm and merit. In Section 1, attention is confined only to the images that are installed in the shrines, while Section 2 deals with those found outside the shrines.

Section 1

ICONS (ENSHRINED)

The principal deity of the temple is Vishnu as Varadarāja. The Hindu mind took delight and solace in conceiving of God in multifarious forms and aspects. In the temples of Tamilnād, Vishnu was worshipped in the different attitudes—*sthānaka* or standing, *āsana* or sitting and *sayana* or reclining.[1] Here, Varadarāja is depicted in his standing posture in the erect *samabhanga* pose. His two upper hands hold *śanka* and *chakra*, while his lower left holds the *gada* and the right is in the *abhaya-mudra*. All the characteristic attributes of Vishnu are found—*kirīta-makuṭa* or a high crown, *makara-kunḍala* in the ears, *hāras* or necklaces, *keyūra* (armlets), *kankaṇas* (wristlets), *udara-banda* round his waist, *kaṭibanda* around his hip, *yajñōpavīta* or the sacred thread. Srī or Lakshmi is on his right chest. The *mūlabhēra* is shown without consorts, whereas the *utsavamūrti* is flanked by Srī-dēvi on his right and Bhū-dēvi on his left. As already pointed out, the *mūlabhēra* was originally in wood and was changed at a later date into one of stone. The *utsava-vigraha* of Lord Varadarāja is also in the same pose but flanked by the consorts. They are bronze-icons of exquisite beauty (Fig. 13). In fact, they are considered by the Srī-Vaishnavas to be among the oldest and most beautiful icons. The central figure is in the *samabhanga* posture, whereas flanking images of Srī-dēvi and Bhū-dēvi are in rhythmic *tribhanga* pose. The depiction is tender and charming and can well belong to the earlier half of the 11th century A.D.

Nrisimha

In the second *prākāra* there is a shrine for Nrisimha the man-lion incarnation of Vishnu. An inscription dated A.D. 1131 mentions the deity as Singapperumāḷ (the Lion-God).[2] Almost all early temples have idols of Nrisimha and Varāha. The *āgamas* require the figure of Nrisimha to be set up on the west of the central shrine.[3] This is faithfully followed in this temple. Here in this shrine he is represented in the *yōga*-form. He is seated on the *padmāsana* in the *utkuṭika* posture i.e., knees bent crosswise and belted around by the *yōgapaṭṭa*.[4]

Ranganātha

Vishnu is enshrined in the *sayana* pose as *anantasāyi* here. This shrine is on the outermost *prākāra* on northern bank of the Anantasaras tank. Though the present shrine is of only the Vijayanagar times, the deity seems to be older. There is an inscription of the 11th century elsewhere in the temple which refers to the installation of Vishnu in recumbent pose in a shrine in this temple. It is quite probable that the reference is to this image According to the *āgamic* injunctions, the head of the reclining figure should be to the left of the worshipper. This is followed here too. The shrine and the deity face south and the head is placed on the west.

The popularity of the temple of Ranganātha at Srīrangam has probably influenced the erection of this deity here. We get a number of other instances showing the influence of Srīrangam on Kāñchi. This is one of them. Though the shrine is unfortunately in a state of neglect, the deity is graceful and bold in its features.

The other forms of Vishnu for whom there are separate shrines are Varāha (boar-incarnation), Krishna and Rāma. The shrines for the former two are dilapidated and in disuse. The *utsava*-idol of Krishna is kept in the main shrine. Another image of Krishna depicted as a young boy drinking milk was installed in the time of Krishnadēva Rāya.

Perundēvi

Srī or Lakshmi, the chief consort of Vishnu, is called by different local Tamil names such as Ranganāyaki in Srīrangam, Alarmēlumangai or Padmāvati at Tirupati, Vēdavalli at Tiruallikēṇi. Here, she is called Perundēvi or Periapirāṭṭi, the prime consort. But the iconic representation of all of them is more or less the same. She is as usual seated on the *padmāsana*. She has four arms, the lower two being in the *abhaya* and *varada-mudras* and the rear ones carry the lotus-bud in each of them. She is richly decked with the *karaṇḍa makuṭa* and other jewels. The icons both in stone and metal are beautiful, though conventional (see Fig. 13 left extreme). They may be placed in the later Chōḷa period, about the first half of the 13th century A.D., when indeed the Tāyār shrine came to be built.

Āṇḍāḷ and Malayāla Nāchiār

There is a separate shrine for each of them on either side of the *gōpura*-entrance of the second *prākāra*. The *mūlabhēra* and the *utsava-bhēras* of both the figures are of exquisite beauty and have interesting iconographic details. Āṇḍāḷ or Gōda is represented as a beautiful young maiden, a bride with her hair done up as *kēsa-banda*. She stands in a graceful *tribhanga* pose, holding a flower in her hand. While Āṇḍāḷ was the daughter of a commoner, Periāḷvār, Sērakulavallināchiār, was the daughter of the Chēra king and hence she is wearing a *kirīta-makuṭa*. She also stands in the *tribhanga* pose. While Āṇḍāḷ holds the flower in her left, she holds it in her right hand. It is of interest to note that at Srīrangam, Sērakulavalli Nāchiār is represented in the seated pose, while here at Kāñchi she is standing. The icons of the Āṇḍāḷ and Sērakulavalli look almost alike and seem to have been the products of early 14th century A.D., when the late-Chōḷa tradition was yielding place to the early Vijayanagar style. Conventionalism had set in but the beauty of the form was not affected.

Sēnai Mudaliār

Visvaksēna or Sēnai-mudaliār is the commander of the hordes of Vishnu and as such holds an important place, nearest to the main deity. There is a small shrine for him within the second *prākāra* close to the 'hill'. He holds an important place in the *āchārya* hierarchy of the Srī-Vaishnavas, next only to Srī or Lakshmi. He is invoked by them at the beginning of all auspicious ceremonies. He is also the custodian of the personal effects of the Lord and so, in all important festivals, special worship is offered to him first. His image which is a small one here represents him in seated posture with four hands, the upper ones carrying the discus and the conch while the right lower hand is in *tarjani* (warning) pose and the left one holds a heavy *Gada* or mace.[5]

Anantāḻvār (Fig. 14)

An interesting feature of this temple is that it has a separate shrine for Garuḍa, Ananta and Sudarsana Chakra as at Srīrangam. These three and the Pānchajanya (conch) are called the *Nityas* or *Nitya-Sūris*, who eternally enjoy the presence and contact of the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa in His abode *Paramapada*. They are considered to be in eternal communion with the Lord even in His Transcendent or the *Para* form. They are engaged in continuous service (*kainkarya*) to the Lord. A popular Tamil verse of the Āḻvārs eulogises Ananta for the multifarious services he renders to the Lord : "He serves as a couch to the Lord in the distinctive seat; as an umbrella when the Lord walks; as a seat when He sits; as sandals when He stands and as a float in the sacred ocean of milk."[6] The very name *Śēsha* means that he is in eternal servitude to Lord in various forms, in all places, in all states and at all times. The depiction of the Ananta or Śēsha in the human form with the hood above is one of the exquisite representations in this temple. It is datable to the 13th century A.D.

Garuḍa

Garuḍa who is affectionately called by the Srī-Vaishnavas as Garuḍālvār or Peria-Tiruvaḍi has his place directly opposite to the presiding deity in all temples. So also here. He is the faithful devotee of the Lord and so he is in the *anjali* pose. Being the Lord's mount he is standing with outspread wings, ever ready to carry Him. The fine image of Garuḍa is placed in a specially allotted shrine facing the sanctum. The Garuḍa image is placed not only in the shrine but also in the corners of the *maṇḍapas* and the *prākāra* walls.

Sudarśana or Chakrattāḻvār

Chakrattāḻvār is the personification of the discus, one of the weapons of Vishnu. Though the metal image of the *chakra* alone can be found in all Vishnu temples, separate shrines for the *chakra* as the *mūlabhēra* and in the personified form are extremely rare and found only in older temples like Srīrangam and Tirumalai. The representation found in our temple is one of the most powerful and impressive of its kind. It is in outline a *chakra* or circular frame with *jvāla* or flames depicted on the rim. Within the large circle, there is the *shatkōṇa* design made up by two interlacing equilateral triangles. In the centre of this is another smaller circle in which stands Sudarśana in fearful aspect, his hair standing out in *jaṭās* or plaits which are like the flames of the God of fire. He is having prominent tusks. On the reverse, there is the figure of Narasimha in the centre in the *yōga* form. This image in our temple is quite impressive both in stone and metal. One peculiarity observed in the metal image or *utsava* idol is that within the circular framework there are as many as seven figures of Chakrattāḻvār in standing pose—the main one in the centre and six smaller ones are in each of the small peripheral triangles of rays of the six-pointed star. This depiction is indeed unique and hardly met with anywhere else.

Gaṇēsa

The presence of a separate shrine for Gaṇēsa in a Vishnu temple is interesting. It is in the south-west corner of the second *prākāra*. It is an uncommon type of

Gaṇēsa known as the *Valampuri* Gaṇēsa, who has his trunk or proboscis turned to his right instead of left. The image is a fine product of the later Chōḷa times.

Danvantrin

Another rarity in this temple is the shrine for Danvantrin—the father of Indian Medicine and an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The shrine is on the south-east corner of the second *prākāra*. Both the *mūla* and the *utsava* images are small. He is seated with two hands, one of them bearing a vessel of nectar.[7] It is well known that Rāmānuja instituted a hospital or *arōgyaśāla* and renovated the Danvantrin shrine at Srīrangam temple. He placed his disciple Garuḍavāhana Pundita in charge of the shrine and made arrangements for offering of medicinal decoction or *kashāya* to God every night before the closure of the temple.[8] Some such practice based on Rāmānuja's injunctions should have inspired the construction of a shrine for Danvantrin at Kāñchi too.

Icons of Āḻvārs and Āchāryas

As already remarked an important feature of a Srī-Vaishnava temple is the deification of the Āḻvārs and Āchāryas. Inscriptional and literary evidences were cited to show that probably the Mudal-āḻvārs, Nammāḻvār and possibly Tirumangai and Āndāḷ were deified prior to the Vijayanagar times, though separate shrines for them came later on. The rest of the Āḻvārs seem to have been deified in the early decades of the Vijayanagar rule. The iconographic features of many of the Āḻvārs are alike i e., the three Mudal-āḻvārs and Tirumalisai are seated with *anjali-hasta.* Tirumangai Āḷvār, Kulasēkhara and Tondaradippodi are in standing pose—the former two in royal dress and the third as a humble devotee. The metal-icons of Nammāḻvār and Madurakavi and the Nāthamunigaḷ housed in the same shrine are of remarkable beauty. They display unmistakable Chōḷa grace. Nammāḻvār is seated in the centre in a yōgic posture while Madurakavi and Nāthamuni are standing on either side. The former was a direct disciple who said that he knew no God other than Nammāḻvār and the latter (Nāthamuni) was the first to popularise Nammāḷvār's hymns.[9] So, they form an inseparable trio in the minds of the Srī-Vaishnavas. This sentiment has been admirably portrayed in metal here. The depiction of Nammāḻvār with his right arm half bent and held near his chest in *chin-mudra* is said to be unique and not to be found in any other temple of South India.

Among the idols of *āchāryas*, that of Rāmānuja stands out for its suppleness and beauty. It is a rare and fine Chōḷa image, depicting Rāmānuja with the *vyakyāna-mudra* which is very unusual. He is usually shown in *anjali* pose; but here, and at Tirumalai, he is depicted with the *vyākyāna-mudra* or pose of exposition. This image was installed here in A.D. 1191 and as such is one of the earliest portrayals of Rāmānuja.[10]

The iconographic features of other *āchāryas* like Āḷavandār and Kūrattāḻvār are more or less of the same pattern. They are, as usual, shown seated with *anjali* pose. Both the *mūlabhēra* and the bronze icon of Manavāḷa Mahāmuni are handsome and display admirable poise, characteristic of the Vijayanagar times (Fig. 15). The *mūlabhēra* has a serpent hood over as Manavāḷa Mahāmuni is believed to be an

incarnation of Ādisesha.

Section 2

ICONS (NOT ENSHRINED)

All the extant specimens of Chōḷa sculptures in stone an dmetal are found installed only in the shrines. Outside in the various *maṇḍapas* and other auxiliary structures, the plastic scheme is dominated by the Vijayanagar style. In fact, this temple provides a fine array of Vijayanagar sculptures, rich in iconographic details and visual beauty.

The places where these sculptures are found are the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*, the *Vāhana-maṇḍapa*, the *Tirukkachi-nambi-maṇḍapa*, the *maṇḍapas* in front and by the side of the *Abhishēka maṇḍapa* and Nammāḻvār shrine. But the best representative collection is to be found at the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* which alone contains more than eight hundred bas-reliefs, depicting various *purānic* themes and characters. But, many of the themes are often repeated in this *maṇḍapa* and elsewhere. The subject matter of sculpture is varied and comprises of the scenes from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Bhāgavata* and other *purāṇas*; the episodes connected with the *sthalapurāṇa* of the temple; the Dasāvatāra or the ten incarnations of Vishnu and other minor incarnations; the Vaishnava saints or Āḻvārs and *āchāryas*; portrait-sculptures of royal benefactors; *mithunas* or love-scenes, comic scenes and a few animal motifs.

The sculptures described below are all from the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* unless otherwise stated.

Style

The sculptures found in the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* and the other *maṇḍapas* of this temple mentioned above undoubtedly take their rank with some of the best and mature specimens of the Vijayanagar art of the 16th century A.D. Though conventional, they display accurate and mature workmanship. Except in a few cases where there is exaggeration of features or stiff disposition, the figures are natural in pose and attitude. A certain amount of standardisation of iconographic details is noticeable, but there is no stylisation as is seen in some of the exaggerated figures of Nāyak school of Madurai or Tirunelveli. Here, the figures are of modest size and of pleasing demeanour. The artist's fondness for displaying the towering jewelled crown, some of which are typical of those worn by the Vijayanagar kings, elaborately folded draperies and lavish jewellery like necklaces, a rmlets, anklets etc., is clearly noticeable. A desire to depict Vishnu in unique forms is also seen in such peculiar poses like the *Dasabhuja*-Vishnu, *Astabhuja*-Vishnu, Vishnu dancing on the *apasmāra* (like Naṭarāja), etc. While some of the figures of Gods are somewhat static, the figures like Dasaratha and his queens, Tirukkachi-nambi are admirable examples to show that the sculptors were capable of depicting feelings and aspirations. The sculpture of Tirukkachi-nambi ever standing to do his fanning service to the Lord is one of the best sculptures of this temple. The narrative panels depicting various scenes from *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Bhāgavata* testify that the artists were capable of showingmovement. There is a good number of portrait-sculptures of kings, queens and chieftains, with the Vijayanagar royal dress.

The dexterity in depicting the sensuousness of the amorous couples indulging in the various acts of the love-game is seen in many sculptures in the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* and the *vāhana-maṇḍapa.* The Vijayanagar artists took special delight in depicting many comic figures of clown, street-dancer, gipsy etc., which throw interesting side-lights on the folk-arts and many amusements of the times. Similarly, curious animal figures like two cows having one common head are also seen.

In short, one sees in these sculptures a close affinity of theme and style to the beautiful sculptures found in the temples like the Hazāra Rāma and Viṭṭhala temples at Hampi. They are exuberant but not exaggerated or uncouth. They are conventional, but not stylised or prosaic. They combine beauty of form with restraint in modelling. Though a few jarring notes could be seen here and there, they are on the whole excellent products of one of the most attractive schools of art of South India.

A. Rāmāyaṇa scenes

A lofty and ornamental plinth of the *Kalyāna-maṇḍapa* is divided into a number of horizontal bands with exquisitely carved designs. While friezes of floral and animal designs occupy the top bands, the lowest course has a running narrative panel depicting some of the scenes from the Rāmāyana. Some of the outstanding episodes are : Rishyasringa performing the *yajña* wherefrom he got the *havis*; Dasaratha with his three queens receiving the *havis* (Fig. 16); the birth of Rāma, Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrugna; two men lifting up the divine bow of Janaka and Rāma breaking it.[11] Rāma's meeting with Sugrīva and his encounter with Vāli are depicted with vigour.

In one of the panels Rāma demonstrates his valour as an archer to Sugrīva by shooting through the seven trees with a single arrow (Fig. 17). All the seven trees are standing on the body of a serpent. The arrow piercing all the trees passed through the serpent's neck. This is evidently after a Kannada version of the episode found later in the *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa* also. Earlier version has inspired similar panels at the Hoysalēśvara temple at Halebid and the Hazāra Rāma temple at Hampi.[12]

After Rāma proved his valour Sugrīva sought his help against his powerful brother Vāli. In another panel Sugrīva is seen bowing down humbly in front of Rāma who blesses him.

The Vāli-Sugrīva fight is depicted with considerable vigour. Vāli is shown over-powering Sugrīva by pressing the latter's head down. Sugrīva is groaning in agony. Rāma and Lakshmana are shown standing behind the tree and watching the fight. Rāma is aiming an arrow at Vāli (Fig. 18).

The other scenes depicted are : the union between Rāma and Vibhīshana; Rāma embracing Hanumān who brought the ring from Sīta; Hanumān lifting the Sanjivi hill; Rāma seated on the shoulders of Hanumān and fighting Rāvaṇa etc. Hanumān in particular is depicted repeatedly in different poses. Worship of Hanumān, the symbol of Hindu valour and prowess, became very popular during the days of Vijaya-nagar empire (Fig. 19). He was glorified with many attributes of Vishnu and in one figure, he is shown with *Śankha, Chakra* etc.

B. Scenes from Krishnāvatāra

Scenes depicting Krishna-līla or the playful acts of Krishna were popular with the Vijayanagar poets and artists. Several works appeared on the theme of the Krishna legend such as Pōtana's *Bhāgavata-purāṇa*, Vīrabhadra's *Jaimini Bhārata*, Krishnadēva Rāya's *Jāmbavati Kalyāṇam* and Timmana's *Pārijātapaharanam*. Similarly there was a spurt in the sculpture representation too. He is depicted in three stages : as a child, as a mischievous little boy full of fun and frolic and fond of stealing milk and butter and as a grown-up man affording protection to the cowherds. Some of the scenes depicted are : Krishna killing the demon who came in the form of a bird (Bakāsura) (Fig. 20); Krishna seated with a stolen pot of butter; tied to a stone-mortar by Yasoda; dancing over the shoulders of the Gopis; making love with a Gopi and at the same time stealthily taking butter from the pot kept on her head; stealing the sarees and garments of the Gopis while they were taking bath in the Yamuna, i.e., *Vastrāpaharana* (Fig. 21) is found in the *vāhana-maṇḍapa*; lifting the Gōvardhana hill (Fig. 22); dancing over the hooded snake (*Kāḷiyamardana*—Fig. 23).

Some queer depictions like the *asṭabhuja* and *dasabhuja* Venugōpāla are also found. In both of them Krishna stands cross-legged, playing on the flute. He has six weapons in his hands and the two hands are engaged in playing on flute. The two extra hands of *Dasabhuja* Venugōpāla hold flowers. The cows are shown to be spell-bound by the divine music. The *pāncharātra-āgama* calls this form of Krishna by the name Madana-Gōpāla.[13]

C. Dasāvatāra and other forms of Vishnu

Though the stories of Rāma and Krishna dominate the sculptural scheme, other forms of Vishnu like the Dasāvatāra have also received attention. All the ten incarnations have been sculptured. Particularly popular were the incarnations of Narasimha and Trivikrama. In the *varāha-avatāra* (Fig. 24), he is shown having the human form and the face of a boar. His left leg is bent and made to rest on the jewelled hood of the mythical serpent, Adisesha, representing the nether-world or *pātāla-lōka* from where the earth was delivered. Over the bent leg is seated the Bhū-dēvi the Goddess of the earth, just rescued from ocean. In the Bhū-varāha panels at Māmallapuram, Bhū-dēvi is seated on the right bent leg.[14] The depiction here is more formal.

Narasimhāvatāra is depicted in several scenes. The man-lion figure is shown advancing towards Hiraṇya who lifts up the sword to strike. Narasimha overpowers him, his right hand holding the neck and another catching hold of his crown while a third tightly grips the sword-bearing hand of Hiraṇya, completely disarming him (Fig. 25). A similar depiction in the Pallava style is found at the Vaikunṭaperumāḷ temple at Kāñchi. The next final act of Narasimha tearing the chest of Hiraṇya is also depicted.

Trivikrama-avatāra is also depicted beautifully. Vishnu took this gigantic form to stride the three worlds—the earth, the mid-world and the heaven. In Tamil he is called Ulagaḷanda-Perumāḷ, for whom there is a separate temple at Kāñchi. Here he is shown only with four hands unlike the Pallava figure of Mahābalipuram which shows eight arms, as required by the *Vaikhānasa-āgama*.[15]

Vishnu as Mōhini was a favourite theme and is found repeated at several places. It represents Vishnu in the form of a charming and seductive lady, distributing

the *amrita* to the dēvas. Śiva requested Vishnu to curb the pride of the sages of the Daruka forest. They were seduced and made to lose control of their senses. This theme has given the Vijayanagar artists an opportunity to depict the female form with all its voluptuousness. The *rishis* are shown clustering round her in a sensuous frenzy (Fig. 26).

The rare form of Vishnu as Ādimurthi or Vaikuntanātha is also found. He is seated on the coiled serpent (Fig. 27). *Asṭabhuja Vishnu* is also represented. In one of them he is shown dancing on the *apasmāra* like demon (like Naṭarāja). Vishnu on Garuḍa (Gajēndra-Varada) and as Hayagrīva is also shown, besides separate depiction of Srī-dēvi and Bhū-dēvi.

D. Sthalapurāṇa legends

The following incidents connected with the *Sthalapurāṇa* of this temple have also formed the subject matter of sculptures here.

Brahma with other sages engaged in the performance of the sacrifice at Kāñchi.

Brahma's consort Saraswati who was angry with her husband for not giving her due honour induces the River Vēgavati to flood the sacrificial altar and spoil it (Fig. 28). Nārada who instigated Saraswati is also shown in the sculpture. From the sacrificial fire emerged Vishnu in the Punyakōṭi *vimāna* (Fig. 29).

E. Āḷvārs and Āchāryas

A few representations of the Āḷvārs are also found. Tirumangai is represented as a warrior-chieftain (Fig. 30), Periāḷvār and Nāthamuni with cymbals, Kulasēkhara in his royal dress. By far the best representation is that of Tirukkachi-nambi, found in many *maṇḍapas* including the *Tirukkachi-nambi-maṇḍapa*. He is depicted in *anjali* in all humility carrying the *ālavatta*, a long-handled fan (Fig. 31). Rāmānuja getting initiation from Peria-nambi is also represented.

According to the *Bhōgavatapurāṇa*, Vēdavyāsa was one of the manifestations of Vishnu. Hence, his representations are found in the Vishnu temples at Srīrangam and Kāñchi. The *Vishnudarmōttara* states that Vyāsa should wear dark brown *jaṭās* and should be shown with his four disciples, Sumantu, Jaimini, Paila and Vaisampāyana. In this figure, the disciples are not clearly identifiable. Perhaps Śankara was one.

F. Āyudapurushas and other celestial figures

Sudarśana or discus, the chief of Vishnu's weapons, is personified. He stands within a circle of flame. In another sculpture he is represented on the *Garuḍa* and topped by the Ādisēsha. He has five faces and sixteen hands and carries *Sūlas* (Fig 32).

Besides this, Gandharvas, Kinnaris and Yakshas are also shown.

G. Love scenes

Quite a number of sculptures depict intimate love-scenes. As in poetry, so in sculpture, due place was given for the *Sringāra-rasa*. Various explanations have been given to justify their presence in a religious place, which need not be repeated here. But what is to be noted is that such representations which were restrained

and limited increased in number and sensuousness during the Vijayanagar epoch. They are to be seen repeated in almost all Vijayanagar and Nāyak structures all over South India. They are characteristic of the age which glorified joyous life and happiness.

At the main entrance to the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* are the life-size representations of Manmatha and Rati, embodiments of God and Goddess of Love in Indian mythology (Fig. 33). Manmatha or Kāma is the son of Krishna and is believed to be personification of everlasting manly beauty. He is seated on the swan (*hamsa*) and is engaged in a sport of shooting an arrow of flowers from his bow made of sugar-cane stalk. His consort Rati is riding merrily on a parrot.

Inside the *maṇḍapa*, there are representations of royal courtesans, amorous couples in numerous intimate and some even in obscene poses (Fig. 34).

H. Jesters and folk scenes

A comic touch is given to the whole treatment by the depiction of many royal clowns, folk-dancers, acrobatic scenes and curious-headed animals. There is the typical buffoon with his pot-belly, snub-nose and wide mouth in uncouth dance pose. His cross-belt, wristlets, armlets, and the stylish head-gear show that he was a court-jester (Fig. 35). Another dancing figure is playing on the drum Jālara tightly held close to his chest. Two other street-jesters, possibly gypsies, are having two small sticks or kōlāṭṭams to play with one another. A gypsy girl or *kuratti* is depicted in a dance pose. She is wearing a skirt instead of a saree and has an elaborate coiffeur. Her little baby is tied close to her breasts in the typical fashion in which it is done even today by the gypsies. The palm-leaf basket which she holds in her hands is usually made by this gypsy class.[16]

I. Portrait-sculptures

Representation of the mortals among the immortals was not popular in early sculptures. Hence, portrait-sculptures of kings and queens are extremely few in the Pallava and the Chōḷa times. But in the Vijayanagar and the Nāyak times, the artists came out of this obsession and introduced portrait-sculptures of kings, chieftains etc., who patronised the temples. Thus the bronze-portraits of Krishnadēva Rāya and his queens are found at Tirumalai. Similarly, the portrait-sculptures of a number of the Nāyak rulers are found in Pudumandapam, Madurai. In our temple also, there is a good sprinkling of such figures, both in stone relief and bronze. But unfortunately, there are no labels and so they remain unidentified. Some tentative identifications are suggested here.

In one of the pillars of the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* there is a royal figure. Since the *maṇḍapa* was built by Aḷagia Manavāḷa Jīyar in the 16th century, this may be of the king Sadāśiva or his predecessor Achyuta who visited this temple and performed *mukta-tulābhāra* (Fig. 36). Similarly, in the four-pillared *maṇḍapa* near the entrance the representation may be that of Achyuta and his wife Varadāmbika. The portrait-figure of Aḷagia Manavāḷa Jīyar is found in several places—in a niche at the top of the compound walls in the fourth prākāra; in one of the pillars of the *maṇḍapa* in front of the Tāyār shrine and also in the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa*.

Rāja Tōdarmal

There are bronze figures of Rāja Tōdarmal and his family at the entrance of the fourth prākāra (Fig. 37). They are kept in memory of his services to the temple at a critical time. Of the three life-size statues, the central one is that of Tōdarmal and the other two are probably his mother Māta Mōhan De and his wife Pita Bibi. He was a Hindu chieftain who served under Sādat-ulla-Khān, the first Nawab of the Carnatic. He has the beard, dress and turban in the Muslim fashion. He did notable services to the Vishnu temples at Tirupati and Srīrangam, where too his statues are kept.

NOTES

1. *Peria Tirumoḷi*, v. 8. 3.
2. 521 of 1919.
3. T.A. Gopinatha Rao : *Elements*, Vol. I, pp. 39-40.
4. *Ibid.*
5. T.N. Srinivasan : *A Handbook of South Indian Images* (1954), p. 60.
6. III, Iyarpa, 1, v. 53.
7. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
8. EI.. XXIV, p. 90 ff.
9. I. Thousand.
10. 493 of 1919. The images at Srīperumbūdūr, Srīrangam and Melkote are believed to have been prepared during the last days of Rāmānuja.
11. A similar scene is found in the *Kalyāna-maṇḍapa* at Hazāra Rāma temple, Hampi.
12. J.O.R., Vol. 28, pp. 68-73.
13. H.K. Sastri, *South Indian Images* (1916), p. 23.
14. T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *op. cit.*, pp. 132 ff. Plate XXXVI.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Similar gypsy sculptures are seen in the Mīnākshi temple, Madurai, Āṇḍāḷ temple at Srivilliputtūr etc.

CHAPTER X

PAINTING AND OTHER ARTS

General features

The art of painting which was cultivated by the Pallava kings to a limited extent reached the zenith of glory under Rājarāja Chōḷa the Great, as exemplified by the specimens available in the Great Temple, Thanjavūr. Subsequent to this period the art seems to have suffered for want of patronage. But the art witnessed a revivalism and fresh impetus in the Vijayanagar epoch when a great spurt in the painting-art was noticeable in many of their temples. Numerous specimens are available at places like Somapalli in Chittoor District, Lepakshi[1] in Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh, Hampi and Anagondi.[2] Kāñchipuram which received ample patronage from the Vijayanagar monarchs like Krishnadēva Rāya, Achyuta Rāya, Sadāśiva Rāya, Venkaṭa-II and others in architectural and sculptural spheres did not fail to attract the Vijayanagar painters also. Thus the specimens of the Vijayanagar paintings are to be seen in the Varadarājaswāmi temple and the Jain temple at Tiruparuttikunram at Kāñchi.[3] But the former are comparatively less known and no separate study of them has been made so far.

Section 1

PAINTINGS

Places where paintings are found

In the Varadarājaswāmi temple the paintings are found on the walls of the outer verandah surrounding the central shrine. The wall-space is divided into a number of crudely drawn compartments in which are accommodated the painted panels. The figures are large-sized and bold, but much defaced and darkened. Traces of vandalism are clearly seen, especially with the caste-mark on the paintings.

Subject-matter

The subject-matter of the paintings is religious. It is limited in range. Scenes from the *sthalapurāṇa* of the temple, Āḻvārs and *Āchāryas* and the presiding deities of the various *Divya-dēsas* or sacred Vishnu temples are portrayed. Most of the paintings contain labels in Tamil and Telugu in the script which is clearly of the 16th century A.D. We shall study these paintings under three groups :

(i) Scenes from the sthalapurāṇa

(1) Gajēndra-Varada panel : Varada mounted on Garuḍa comes to rescue the elephant from the clutches of the crocodile. The elephant is shown crying for help

with its uplifted trunk. The small square below the elephant is the tank.

(2) Varadarāja as he emerged in the resplendent *Punyakōṭi-vimāna*.

(ii) Āḻvārs and Āchāryas

At a few places Nammāḻvār and Rāmānuja are depicted with characteristic poses. Nammāḻvār is depicted as at his birth-place Āḻvār Tirunagari (Tirunelveli District). He is seated in the *yōgic* posture and on either side of him are shown in a smaller scale all the other Āḻvārs and Rāmānuja. The idea that Nammāḻvār or Saṭagōpa is the central figure among Srī-Vaishnava preceptors is well portrayed here. The label above mentions the place as '*Tirunagari-sthalam*'. In another painting, the famous scene of the three saints 'Mudal Āḻvārs' or 'First Āḻvārs' meeting at a place called Tirukkōlūr and having a vision of Lord Tiruvikrama is depicted.

(iii) The majority of the figures are those of the presiding deities of many of sacred Srī-Vaishnava centres (*Divya-dēsas*). The labels above mention details like the place-name, the presiding deity therein, the sacred *tīrtha*, the sage to whom the Lord gave a vision. Places beyond the borders of Tamilnād like Ahōbilam in Andhra Pradesh and Naimi-sāraṇyam in Upper India have also been included. Some of the places and deities portrayed are :

1. Vishnu as *anantasāyi* (reclining on the Serpent Ananta) from the place named Tirukkōlūr in Tirunelveli District of Tamilnād. It was the birth-place of Madurakavi-āḻvār, a direct disciple of Nammāḻvār. The Goddess Kōḻūr-Valli Tāyār is shown in a small inset-shrine on the right side of the main deity; on the left is Garuḍa in *anjali* pose.
2. Vishnu in standing posture from Tirukkaṇḍiyūr in Thanjāvūr District, on his right Kōmaḷavalli Tāyār is shown seated in a shrine.
3. Vishnu seated in *ardhaparyankāsana* and flanked by Srī and Bhū, also seated, from the temple Tanjāimāmaṇikkōil in Thanjāvūr; on the deity's left stands a sage or *rishi* with the *jaṭā* and the beard. The name of the Goddess is mentioned as Sembakavalli Tāyār.
4. Vishnu as Narasimha from Ahōbilam in Andhra Pradesh. Narasimha is depicted in different poses—seated in the *yōgic* form in the *utkutika* posture; seated in *padmāsana*; seated with Lakshmi on his lap (Lakshmi-Narasimha form) and then at the extreme right, lower panel, he is depicted in the act of killing Hiraṇya. Depiction is vigorous and fine.
5. One other painting near the steps is not clearly identifiable (Fig. 38). At the top are seen Chandra or the Moon-God, a sage and the Garuḍa—all in *anjali* pose probably worshipping the Lord. At the bottom, the Goddess is seated in a shrine. Brahma (three-headed) and another Dēva, probably Indra, are worshipping the Goddess. The name of the place is not indicated. Probably it is Naimi-sāraṇyam in North India.

Besides these, Vishnu in reclining posture from places like Srīrangam and Padmanābapuram; in standing posture from places like Tirumalai is depicted at different places. The *Dasāvatāras* or the ten-incarnations of Vishnu have also been drawn. But most of them have been blurred and considerably spoiled.

Technique of painting

Dr. Paramasivam, who has done some considerable scientific analysis of the Chōḷa and Vijayanagar paintings at Thanjāvūr and other places, has observed that the paintings of the Vijayanagar times were generally done in the technique known as *fresco-Secco* as distinct from the fresco technique adopted by the Chōḷa artists.[4] The former method consists in mixing the pigments with lime water and applying it over the wet plaster. The Chōḷa paintings had to be done before the wet plaster could dry up. Hence, they required dexterous and swift hand on the part of the artist. But in the *fresco-Secco* process of the Vijayanagar days, the painting was done on the dry wall. This process did not require the skill and quickness in execution. As Dr. Paramasivam remarks, 'the five centuries that separate the Chōḷa art from the Vijayanagar art mark a period when slow decadence set in not only over the art of painting, but also in the technique of the process of painting'.[5]

Colour-scheme and stylistic features

Most of the colour has vanished or become dull and what remains can only be seen in patches. Still in some places the brightness of the colours especially in the golden ones is retained. Originally, the colours should have been strong. The colours discernible are red, yellow, light green and white. Light yellow has been used for the body complexion of the Āḻvārs and *āchāryas* while light green or blue is used for the body complexion of deities like Ranganātha. Red has been used for the garments, while golden colour has been used to denote jewels like necklaces, bangles etc. For the Goddesses and the devotees, mineral colours seem to have been used.

The background is adorned with simply drawn flowers, creepers and trees in white pigments against dark background. Ornamental exaggeration in depicting flowers and clouds is noticeable. The paintings are of course conventional and in a few places much stylised. But the majority of them are in good form and proportion having clear conception. Many of the figures have the feet directed to one side and therefore shown in half or three-fourth profile—a characteristic feature of the Vijayanagar and the Nāyak style. But the majority of the figures, as those of Nammāḻvār and other deities, are shown in full frontal view. The figures have somewhat pointed nose and elongated eyes whose upper eye-lid is drawn in. In a few instances such as the Gajēndra-Varada panel and the Narasimha panel there is an attempt to show movements. But otherwise, there is none of the graceful or rhythmic movement displayed in the earlier styles. Many of the features noticed in the sculptures of the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* characterised these paintings also such as the fondness to exhibit the jewelled crown and other jewellery like necklaces, armlets, anklets etc., elaborately folded draperies with hard, flat curves of their designs, heavy stress laid on the many curves in the flesh folds of the neck, belly etc.

Date of the paintings

These paintings display unmistakable kinship with the well-known Vijayanagar paintings at Lepakshi and Tirupparuttikunram at Kāñchi itself. The theme as well as the style of the dress and the headgears of figures are similar to the sculptural traditions found in the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* of the temple and as such can be dated certainly to the middle of the 16th century A.D. The palaeography of the letters

found in the labels clearly confirms this. Dr. N. Venkataramanayya is inclined to date the paintings of the Varadarājaswāmi temple slightly earlier i.e., the beginning of the 16th century. According to him they are 'far superior to the Lepakshi paintings' though he does not explain in what way they are.[6] Though some of the paintings of our temple compare well with those of Lepakshi, the majority of them depict the deities in their formal static pose. They display less flexibility and grace than those of Lepakshi or even Tirupparuttikunram. In the latter places attempts at portraying narrative panels depicting connected episodes are there, which are conspicuous by their absence in the paintings of Varadarāja temple. The colours are not so subdued. Hence, the paintings of the Varadarājaswāmi temple can at best be dated to the latter half of the 16th century and in style they seem to be closely following those of Lepakshi.

Section 2

WOOD CARVINGS

The temple is also a treasure-house of wood-carvings. A number of *vāhanas* or processional vehicles are all made of wood and covered even by copper-plate. The *vāhanas*, such as the Garuḍa, Hanumān, elephant, horse, swan, lion, *vyāḷi* etc., are massive in size and beautiful in form. These vehicles are mentioned even in an inscription datable to the 13th century A.D.[7] Later, the serpent vehicle was presented to this temple in about A.D. 1511 by the Madhva-guru, Vyāsa-tīrtha.[8] Again, in the beginning of the 17th century, Eṭṭūr Kumāra Tātāchārya is said to have presented a number of *vāhanas*, though the names are not specified.[9] There are also two beautiful palanquins made of wood.

Temple car

But the finest specimen of wood-work is the magnificent *Ratha* or the wooden-car of the temple. Nearly 60 ft. in height, it is a veritable temple on wheels. The wheels are about ten feet in diameter. Over the wheels is the basement of the *Ratha* which is schematically a prototype of the temple *adhisṭāna* with all its different horizontal divisions—deeply recessed portions alternating with the projecting bands—all intricately carved with multifarious patterns.

Over the massive and richly decorated base is the portion corresponding to the wall (*pāda*) portion of the temple. But here of course there is no wall but instead a cluster of wooden pillars. In the centre is a high pedestal where the deities are placed. Over the pillars is the *prastara* portion represented by the canopy or the superstructure in the form of a tapering *vimāna* composed of diminishing tiers of wooden rafters. In short, the *Ratha* has all the complements of a shrine.

We can have a closer look at the *adhisṭāna* portion of the *Ratha* of this temple and note its plastic details. On the whole, it is made up of three recessed parts separated by two projecting bands or *paṭṭikas*. The recessed portions are occupied by an array of carved panels, interspersed by turret-like pavilions. The panels present various deities and *purāṇic* themes all carved in high relief. At the bottom are a series of *Bhūta-gaṇas* or amazons who carry, as it were, the entire weight of the *Ratha* on their shoulders. In the next panel are seen the carved figures of seated Narasimha, Gaṇēsa and Vishnu on Garuḍa, Rati and Manmatha. In the corners are the galloping horses with mounted warriors. In the next recessed panel are

shown a continuous array of figures of warriors on horse-back. In the corners are shown the rampant *vyāḷi*.

In the third and the last upper panel are carved a series of *mithuna* or erotic figures including erotic poses of women. They evidently represent the *gōpis* or the cowherd-women with whom little Krishna sported. In one place, Krishna is shown embracing a *gōpi* who is carrying a pot on her head.

The projecting horizontal *paṭṭikas* or bands that separate the panelled portions of the plinth are decorated in the form of expanded lotus-petals and a number of decorative bulbous pendants hang out from the bands. While the car is on the move, these bulbous pendants would swing against one another and create a plethora of bell-like sounds.

It is one of the most beautiful temple-cars of South India. It bears close affinity to the decorative style adopted for the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* inside the Varadarāja temple. In fact, the motifs and themes of sculpture are almost the same and very characteristic of the style of the Vijayanagar period. In an inscription dated A.D. 1517, king Krishnadēva Rāya is reported to have donated a car to this temple and it is not unlikely the present car was the one donated by him.[10] The wooden car has been protected well against weathering by covering it over by well-knit coconut leaves in the olden times and with the zinc sheets at present.

Section 3

JEWELLERY

The practice of adorning the images, particularly those used during processions, with numerous jewels, set with precious stones, encouraged the jewellers' art to a considerable extent. We get several instances of both gold and jewels donated to the temple. Thus in A.D. 1053, a private individual donated golden ear-ornaments to the deity.[11] Naralōkavīra, the minister of Kulōttunga-I, fixed a golden pinnacle over the shrine of Ranganātha within this temple.[12] In about A.D. 1126, 197½ *kaḷañju* of gold and a golden vessel named *sahasradhāra* (a plate with thousand holes used for bathing the deities) were donated by an individual.[13] In the 13th century, a military chieftain Kālingarayan presented to the deity a *yajñōpavīta* in gold.[14] In A.D. 1524, a Vijayanagar officer Rāyasam Srīpādayya donated a jewelled pendant to the God.[15] In Ś 1454 (A.D. 1532), king Achyutadēva Rāya presented a conch, a discus and *ūrdhvapunḍram*—all made of gold and studded with gems and diamonds.[16] He also gave a pendant and a necklace set with gems and pearls. Among the gems mentioned are emerald (*pachai*), opalescent gem (*vaiḍūryam*), sapphire (*nīlam*) and coral.[17] But some of the later ones are intact. For instance the famous *Nīla-vanḍu-padakkam* and other *padakkam* donated by Aḷagia-manavāḷa-Jīyar in the 16th century are still the prized possession. Lord Clive presented a gem-set *makara-kanḍi* for the deity which displays rare workmanship. Another *makarakanḍi* noted for its exquisite beauty is known as *Anantāchār-makarakanḍi* presented by Prativāti Bhayankaram Anantāchārya in the middle of the 19th century. In the same century, Mr. Place, the Collector of Chingleput district, in charge of the temple administration, presented jewels used as head-ornaments. Several other devotees have given large presents to the temple so that today it possesses about 600 ornaments. These

include, among other things, ear-ornaments, *kavachas* or coverings over the body, *kirītas* or crowns of different shapes, conical, circular and bulbous, *ūrdhvapuṇḍra*, nose-ornaments for the Goddesses, necklaces, pendants etc.

NOTES

1. C. Sivaramamurti, *Vijayanagar Paintings from the Temple at Lepakshi,* Vij. Sex Cen. Com. Volume, p. 75 ff.
2. S. Paramasivam, *The Vijayanagar Paintings,* Vij. Sex Cen. Com. Vol., p. 87 ff.
3. T.N. Ramachandran, *The Tirupparuttikunram and its Temples.*
4. S. Paramasivam, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-100.
5. *Ibid.* Also see K.R. Srinivasan, *South Indian Paintings* in the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (Allahabad, 1944) for the elucidation of the techniques in various periods.
6. Dr. Venkataramanayya's opinion as expressed to Dr. S. Paramasivam personally is quoted by the latter in his article, "*The Vijayanagar Paintings*" in the Vij. Sex Cen. Com. Volume, p. 92.
7. S.I.T.I., I, No. 345.
8. S.I.T.I., 370 of 1919.
9. 475 of 1919.
10. 641 of 1919.
11. 519 of 1919.
12. 473 of 1919.
13. 516 of 1919.
14. 430 of 1919.
15. 413 of 1919.
16. S.I.I., VII, p. 54.
17. *Ibid,* No. 53.

APPENDIX

The following is a select list of inscriptions of the Varadarājaswāmi temple, classified according to the dynasty, king and date. The last column gives references to the numbers to the inscriptions given in the Epigraphical Reports. References to the originals wherever published are also given.

King	Date given in the inscription	Equivalents in A.D.	Reference (unless otherwise stated, all inscription Nos. belong to the Epigraphical Report for year 1919)
1	2	3	4
		CHŌḶAS	
Rājādhirāja-I (A.D. 1018-1054)	32nd regnal year	A.D. 1050	519
Kulōttunga-I (A.D. 1070-1120)	3rd year	A.D. 1073	522
	36th year	A.D. 1106	631
	43rd year	A.D. 1113	49 of 1893, S.I.I., IV, 862
	45th year	A.D. 1115	632
	Nil	—	635
Vikrama-Chōḷa (A.D. 1118-1135)	8th year	A.D. 1126	516
	9th year	A.D. 1127	436
	10th year	A.D. 1128	440, 520, S.I.T.I., I, 410
	11th year	A.D. 1129	590
	17th year	A.D. 1135	471
	Nil	—	440
Rājarāja-II (A.D. 1146-1173)	3rd year	A.D. 1149	465
	Nil	—	389
Rājādhirāja-II (A.D. 1163-1179)	14th year	A.D. 1177	48 of 1893; S.I.I., IV, 861
Kulōttunga-III (A.D. 1178-1216)	3rd year	A.D. 1181	403
	4th year	A.D. 1182	477; S.I.T.I., I, 355

1	2	3	4
	10th year	A.D. 1188	36 of 1893; S.I.I., IV, 849
	11th year	A.D. 1189	554
	12th year	A.D. 1190	494
	13th year	A.D. 1191	517 and 620; S.I.T.I.. I, 367
	14th year	A.D. 1192	390, 487 and 493; S.I.T.I., I, 391
	17th year	A.D. 1195	371 and 372; 40 of 1893; S.I.I., IV, 853
	18th year	A.D. 1196	558; S.I.T.I., I, 409
	23rd year	A.D. 1201	348 and 360
	26th year	A.D. 1204	402, 452
	29th year	A.D. 1207	456
	30th year	A.D. 1208	453
	32nd year	A.D. 1210	521, S.I.T.I., I, 422
	34th year	A.D. 1212	361
	35th year	A.D. 1213	346, 417 and 589
	36th year	A.D. 1215	435; S.I.T.I., III, Pt. II, 1205, *Ibid*, I, 428
	37th year	A.D. 1215	451; S.I.T.I., I, 396
Rājarāja-III (A.D. 1216-1246)	7th year	A.D. 1223	351
	10th year	A.D. 1226	514
	11th year	A.D. 1227	598, S.I.T.I., I, 383
	13th year	A.D. 1229	404; S.I.T.I., I, 377
	14th year	A.D. 1230	367, 359, 385 and 408
	15th year	A.D. 1231	432, 463 & 464
	16th year	A.D. 1232	427, 457
	17th year	A.D. 1233	395, 416, 460, 468 S.I.T.I., I, 402, 404
	18th year	A.D. 1234	357, 392, 455, 594, S.I.T.I., I, 349
	19th year	A.D. 1235	345 and 627, S.I.T.I., I, 393
	20th year	A.D. 1236	437, 617, S.I.T.I., Pt. II, No. 1201

1	2	3	4
	21st year	A.D. 1237	358, 387, 400, 560, 596, 621, 622; S.I.T.I., I, 402, 381
	22nd year	A.D. 1238	366, 391, 396, 399, 415, 555; S.I.T.I., I, 398, 401
	23rd year	A.D. 1239	368, 388
	24th year	A.D. 1240	559, 570, 612, 615, 661; S.I.T.I., III, Pt. I, 1200; *Ibid*, I, 416
	25th year	A.D. 1241	607, 609
	26th year	A.D. 1242	551, 552, 557, 610; SITI, I, 356, 408
	27th year	A.D. 1243	403
	28th year		
	29th year	A.D. 1245	352, 566, SITI, I, 426
	31st year	A.D. 1247	566
	TELUGU-CHŌḌAS		
Tammu-Siddhi	Ś 1127	A.D. 1204-05	35 of 1893; Ep. Ind., VII, p. 152
	2nd year	A.D. 1225	556, 563, SITI, I, 407, 417
	7th year	A.D. 1230	46 of 1893; SII, IV, 859
Tikka-I *alias*	Ś 1153	A.D. 1231	446
Madurāntaka-Pottappi	Ś 1157	A.D. 1235	34 of 1893; SII, IV, 847
Tirukkalāttidēva	Nil	—	391
alias Gaṇḍagō-pāladēva (c. A.D. 1223-1250)	21st year	A.D. 1244	387; SITI, I, 402
Manma Siddha-II	3rd year	A.D. 1253	565
Vijayagaṇḍa-	5th year	A.D. 1255	538
gōpāla (A.D.	6th year	A.D. 1256	562
1250-1291)	7th year	A.D. 1257	571
	8th year	A.D. 1258	393; SITI, I,341
	9th year	A.D. 1259	428, SITI, I, 359
	14th year	A.D. 1264	539; SITI, I, 414
	15th year	A.D. 1265	35 and 36 of 1890; SII, IV, 358, 359

1	2	3	4
	16th year	A.D. 1266-67	539, 568, 637; SITI, I, 379, 414
	17th year	A.D. 1267	39 of 1893; SII, IV, 852
	18th year	A.D. 1268	491, 537; SITI, I, 413
	20th year	A.D. 1270	492
	21st year	A.D. 1271	405, 501, 503
	23rd year	A.D. 1273	409
	31st year	A.D. 1281	500
Vīra-Gaṇḍagōpāla (c. A.D. 1290-1316)	3rd year	A.D. 1293	603 of 1919
		KĀḌAVARĀYA	
Kōpperuñjingadēva (c. A.D. 1229-1278)	11th year	A.D. 1253	353
	14th year	A.D. 1254-55	450; SITI, I, 395
	15th year	A.D. 1257	350
	Ś 1182	A.D. 1260	38 of 1890; SII, IV, 361
	19th year	A.D. 1261	365
	20th year	A.D. 1262	356
		PĀṆḌYA	
Jaṭāvarman Sundara Pāṇḍya-I (acc. A.D. 1251)	5th year	A.D. 1256	52 of 1893 and 488; SII, IV, 865
	15th year	A.D. 1266	485 and 486
Jaṭāvarman Vīra Pāṇḍya (acc. A.D. 1253 Co-regent)	8th year	A.D. 1261	483
Vīra Kulasēkhara (A.D. 1268-1308)	—	—	480
Māravarman Vikrama Pāṇḍya (acc. A.D. 1283)	6th year	A.D. 1289	640
		CHĒRA	
Ravivarman Kulasēkhara	46th year	A.D. 1312-13	34 of 1890; Ep. Ind. IV, 145

1	2	3	4
		KĀKATIYA	
Pratāparudra-II (A.D. 1295-1326)	Ś 1238	A.D. 1316	43 of 1893; Ep. Ind. VII, p. 128 ff
		SĀMBUVARĀYA	
Champa *alias* Vīra-Champarāya	Ś 1236	A.D. 1314	51 of 1893; Ep. Ind. III, p. 71
Rājanārāyaṇa Sāmbuvarāya (A.D. 1337-1360)	7th year	A.D. 1344	604; SITI, I, 345
	14th year	A.D. 1351	524
		HOYSĀḶA	
Ballāḷa-III (A.D. 1291-1342)	Bhavaka	A.D. 1335	401; SITI, I, 397
	Mithuna	—	572, 573
		VIJAYANAGAR	
Kampaṇa-II (c. A.D. 1364)	Ś 1288	A.D. 1366	33 of 1890
	Ś 1296	A.D. 1374	662; SITI, I, 375
Harihara-II (A.D. 1377-1404)	Ś 1300	A.D. 1378	31 and 32 of 1810; SII, IV, 354, 355; SITI, I, 350
	Ś 1307	A.D. 1385	SITI, I, 427
	Ś 1325	A.D. 1404	661; SITI, I, 373
			-do- 412
Mallikārjuna (A.D. 1447-1465)	Ś 1373	A.D. 1451	645
		A.D. 1465	37 of 1890
Virūpāksha-II (A.D. 1465-1485)	Ś 1393	A.D. 1471	613
Sāḷuva Narasimha (A.D. 1486-1491)	Ś 1408	A.D. 1486	667; SITI, I, 351
	Ś 1409	A.D. 1487	646; SITI, I, 348
Vīra-Narasinga (A.D. 1505-1509)	Ś 1431	A.D. 1509	601; SITI, I, 411
Krishnadēva Rāya	Ś 1431	A.D. 1509-10	411

1	2	3	4
(A.D. 1509-1529)	Ś 1433	A.D. 1511	370
	Ś 1436	A.D. 1514	478
	Ś 1438	A.D. 1516	474; 659; SITI, I, 392
	Ś 1438	A.D. 1516-17	660; SITI, I, 391
	Ś 1439	A.D. 1517	641; SITI, I, 384
	Ś 1443	A.D. 1521	412; SITI, I, 346
	Ś 1446	A.D. 1524	375, 413
	Ś 1448	A.D. 1527	599
	Ś 1449	A.D. 1528	439, 418
	Ś 1450	A.D. 1529	633
	Ś 1451	A.D. 1529	512
Achyutarāya	Ś 1451	A.D. 1529-30	384; SITI, I, 357
(A.D. 1529-1542)	Ś 1452	A.D. 1530	374, 449 and 646; SITI, I, 378
	Ś 1453	A.D. 1531	481; SITI, I ,342
	Ś 1454	A.D. 1532	472, 541, 543 to 546 and 549, SII, IV, Nos. 53 and 54
	Ś 1455	A.D. 1533	511, 584, SITI, I, 406
	Ś 1455	A.D. 1534	547
	Ś 1456	A.D. 1535	581
	Ś 1457	A.D. 1536	655, 536; SITI, I, 389
	Ś 1459	A.D. 1537-38	422; SITI, I, 354 and 376
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	Ś 1462	A.D. 1541	577, SITI, I, 361
	Ś 1464	A.D. 1542	614; SITI, I, 353
Sadāśiva Rāya	Ś 1466	A.D. 1544	484 and 529
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	Ś 1467	A.D. 1546	525
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	Ś 1471	A.D. 1549	530, 532; SITI, I, 365
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Vēnkaṭa-I (A.D. 1586-1614)	Ś 1509	A.D. 1587	531; SITI, I, 423
	Ś 1510	A.D. 1588	587; SITI, I, 360
	Ś 1513	A.D. 1591	421
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